



# Machine Learning for Tangible Effects: Natural Language Processing for Uncovering the Illicit Massage Industry


PhD Thesis Defense: Rui Ouyang

Sept. 5, 2023

Computer Science  
Harvard University



# Update:

 The talk is now on [youtube](#) !  
 & Thesis is now on [Arxiv](#)



Video shortlink: [tinyurl.com/nro-defense-video](https://tinyurl.com/nro-defense-video)

These slides: [tinyurl.com/nro-defense-slides](https://tinyurl.com/nro-defense-slides)

- My website: [nrobot.dev](https://nrobot.dev)
- My contact: [nouyang@alum.mit.edu](mailto:nouyang@alum.mit.edu)

[ Edit from Sept. 15 ]



# Outline of Talk

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- **Part 1** (20 mins)  
The Google Places dataset: illegal activity in plain sight
- **Part 2** (20 mins)  
The Forum dataset: two case studies and a hackathon

## Review Text (Google Maps)

We went there...



The place smelled...

⋮



Had a great time...



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- **Part 1** (20 mins)  
The Google Places dataset: illegal activity in plain sight
- **Part 2** (20 mins)  
The Forum dataset: two case studies and a hackathon
- **Part 3** (10 mins)  
My research journey:  
| Scotiabank | Digger Finger | Fiducial Force Sensor |  
Call-to-Action  
Acknowledgements

## Review Text (Google Maps)

We went there...

⊕

The place smelled...

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# Content Warning

This work may contain sexist and racist language or topics

Discretion advised

(Should be SFW)

**Feel free to leave any time !** There's cookies outside.



# The Google Places Dataset: Illegal Activity in Plain Sight

## Part I



# The Google Places Dataset: Illegal Activity in Plain Sight

## Part I

### Sections

1. Introduction
2. Classifier
3. Vulnerability Insights with  
Named Entity Recognition
4. Fairness with Ablation &  
Business Hours

# What makes a massage parlor illicit?

Establishments with registered business names that ostensibly provide massage, wellness, and/or spa services while in fact deriving some clientele and revenue through the provision of commercial sex acts.

– V. Bouche and S. M. Crotty, “Estimating demand for illicit massage businesses in Houston, Texas,” *Journal of Human Trafficking*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 279–297, Oct. 2018.



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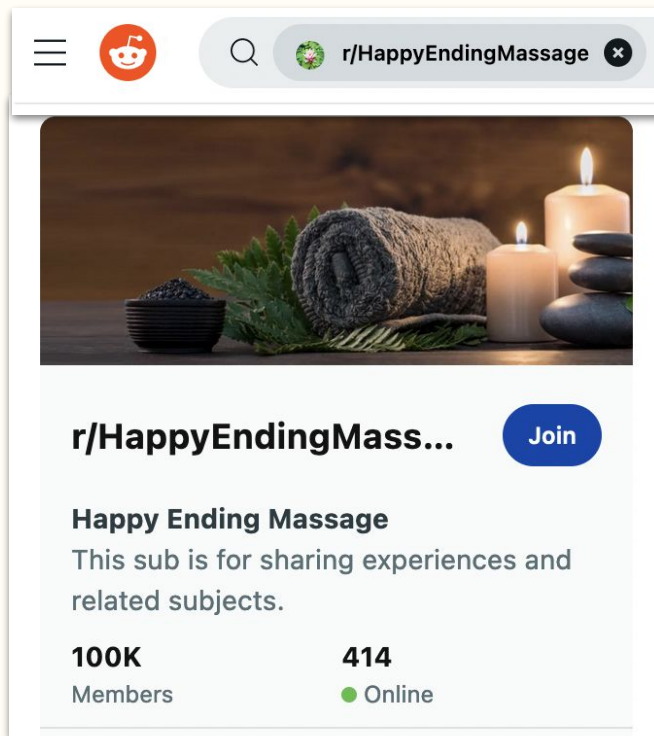
In 2018:

- 11,000+ IMBs in the United States
- Combined annual revenue of \$2.5 billion
- 100+ locations in Manhattan alone that received visits in first half of 2023

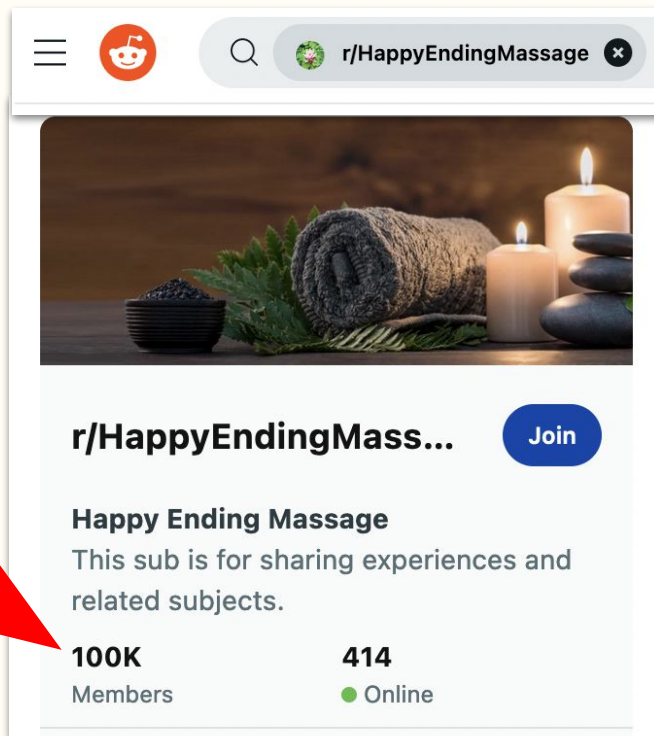


Keyhan, Rochelle, et al. "Human Trafficking in Illicit Massage Businesses (Report)." (2017).

# Not that niche



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# How is it linked to human trafficking?

## IMI Employees

- Generally immigrant women, often undocumented, often in debt (travel loans)
- English barriers
- Often supporting family

Combination of sex and labor trafficking

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"**Trafficking in persons**" shall mean the **recruitment**, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons,

by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, **of fraud, of deception**, of the abuse of power or **of a position of vulnerability** or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits

to achieve the consent of **a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.**

– United Nations Palermo Protocols, which was adopted in 2000

and now ratified by 178 parties 14



# The 4Ps Framework



The United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

# How we can help: The 4Ps Framework

- **Prevention**
  - **Monitoring**
  - **Laws**
  - **Reducing demand**
  - **Public awareness**

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  - **Rehabilitation (access to help and long-term opportunity)**
  - **Re-integration (voluntary repatriation)**



# How we can help: The 4Ps Framework

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- Laws
- **Reducing demand**
- **Public awareness**

Who: Lawmaker

Why: Effect of policy

## ○ Protection

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# How we can help: The 4Ps Framework

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Who: Non-profit

Why: Job training location

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# The Network

## SNAPSHOT – ASSESSING THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE IMI

MARCH 2020

We assess the COVID-19 crisis will severely impact illicit massage business (IMB) operations in the short-to-medium term, particularly in states which ordered the closure of non-essential businesses. The potential long-term effects on the illicit

**IMPLICATIONS OF STATE-WIDE CLOSURES ON IMB REVENUE:** As of 26 March 2020, twenty-three states had ordered the temporary

result in monthly losses of approximately \$143- \$244 million dollars. Net storefront losses will vary based on fixed overhead costs.



# Rubmaps

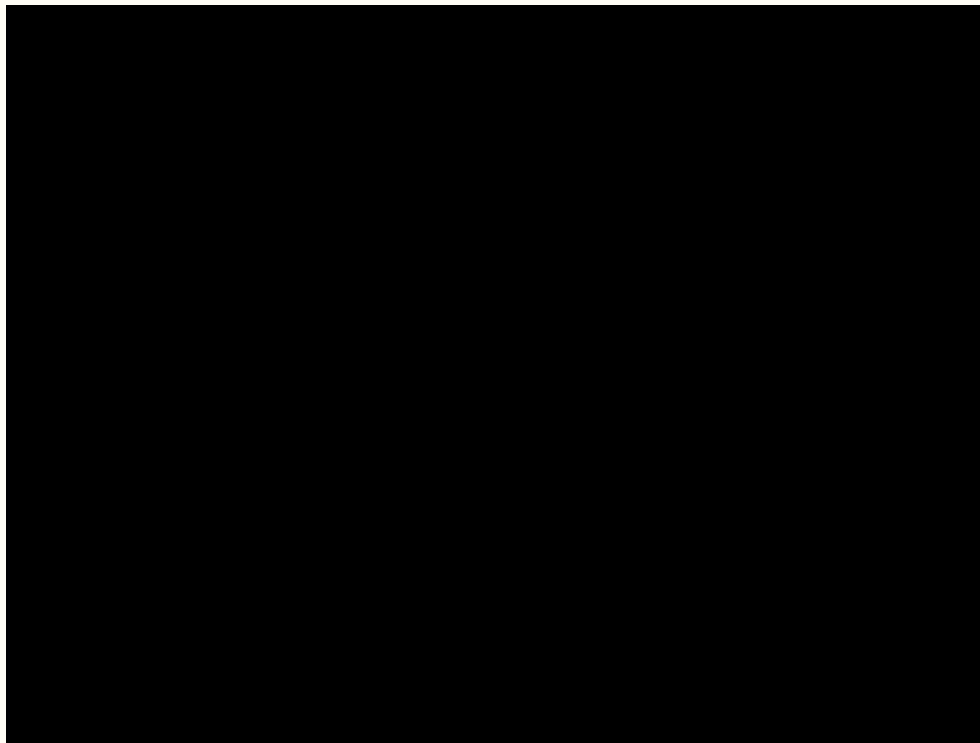
The screenshot shows the Rubmaps website interface. The browser tab is titled "Erotic massage parlor reviews - X". The address bar shows the URL "https://www.rubmaps.ch". The website header includes the Rubmaps logo with the tagline "WHERE FANTASY MEETS REALITY". A search bar is present with a suggestion: "SEARCH: (suggestion Erotic massage Phoenix, Asian massage Phoenix)". There are links for "New user" and "Login". A navigation menu includes "FORUM", "ESCORT REVIEWS", "CANCELLATION", and "CONTACT". A "Safe browsing" indicator is set to "ON".

The main content area is titled "Erotic massage parlor reviews & happy endings" and shows the location "Phoenix, AZ". On the left, there are filters for "nearby cities" and "us states". The "nearby cities" list includes Kansas City (3), Phoenix (100), Glendale (84), Scottsdale (83), Ahwatukee (6), Tempe (25), Mesa (139), Chandler (38), Goodyear (4), and Maricopa (2). The "us states" list includes Alabama (221) and Alaska (64).

The main table displays "Latest Reviews Around You" with columns for LOCATION, PROVIDER, PRICE, RATING, and DISTANCE. The table shows four entries:

| LOCATION   | PROVIDER | PRICE | RATING       | DISTANCE |
|--|----------|-------|--------------|----------|
| [Redacted] City, Arizona<br>Today                                      | Lucy     | \$60  | [Yellow bar] | 16.6 mi  |
| [Redacted] Spa<br>Rd #9D Peoria, Arizona<br>Yesterday                  | Jennifer | \$60  | [Yellow bar] | 14.2 mi  |
| [Redacted] Spa<br>[Redacted] Glendale, Arizona<br>Yesterday            | Mimi     | \$60  | [Yellow bar] | 10.9 mi  |
| [Redacted] Massage<br>[Redacted] Rd #1A Phoenix, Arizona<br>2 days ago | Cici     | \$60  | [Yellow bar] | 5.6 mi   |

# Rubmaps (video)



# User-added listings

Green Bay erotic massage parlors with reviews - 19

**Add MP**

|  | <b>Spa</b><br>Green Bay, WI, 54302<br><b>22 reviews</b> | <b>\$ 60</b><br>per hour | Asian, Chinese<br>massage | Cash Only | Newest Review<br>1 week ago  |
|---|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
|  | <b>Spa</b><br>Green Bay, WI, 54302<br><b>14 reviews</b> | <b>\$ 60</b><br>per hour | Asian massage             | Cash Only | Newest Review<br>2 weeks ago |

» Add new location

**Note: All fields but the ones marked as optional**

**New Location Information**

Name of Massage Parlor:

Street Address:

State:

City:  **Select a state from the list**

Zip Code:

Phone Number (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

Hours of operation: Open time:  10:00

☐ Advanced schedule

Website:

E-mail:

Major Streets:

**Amenities**

Masseuse Ethnicity: ☐ Arab

☐ European

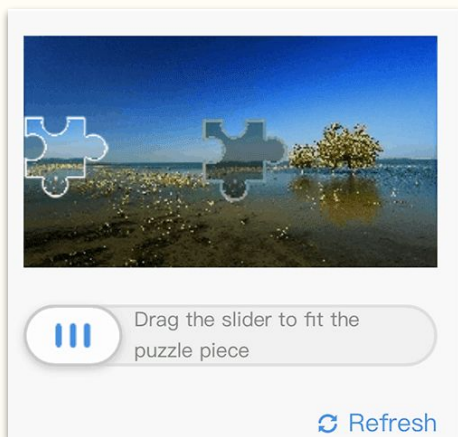
☐ Thai

Thirty Minute Rate:

Forty Five Minute Rate:

# Monitoring over time

- Scrape frequency / CAPTCHA arms race
- Law enforcement action



## CityXGuide.com and affiliated websites have been seized by the Department of Homeland Security

pursuant to a seizure warrant issued in the Northern District of Texas under the authority of 18 U.S.C. § 981(b) and 21 U.S.C. § 853(f) concerning a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2421A.

For media inquiries, please contact the United States Attorney's office for the Northern District of Texas at 214-659-8707.

All law enforcement inquiries can be directed to [CXG.LERequests@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:CXG.LERequests@ice.dhs.gov).

2020, \$15 million forfeiture

# Key Insight

Can we use larger, more stable, well-known website as complementary (or replacement) data source?

- **Rubmaps:** High precision
  - United States only
  - Does not have text (requires subscription)
  - Scraping-based

# Key Insight

Can we use larger, more stable, well-known website as complementary (or replacement) data source?

- **Rubmaps:** High precision
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- **Google Maps:**
  - World-wide
  - Up to 5 reviews per business
  - API calls

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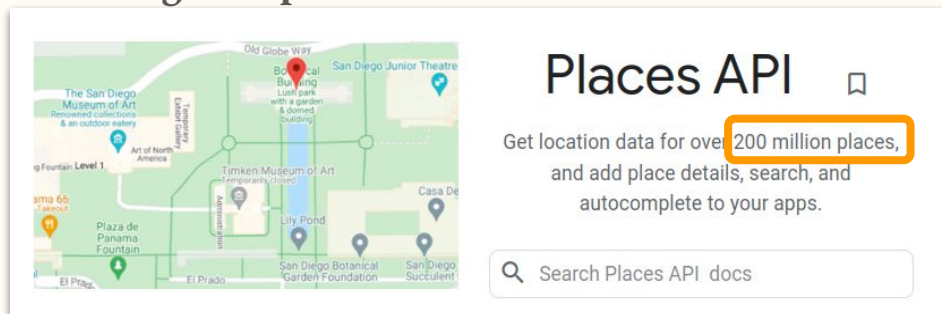
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**Rubmaps:** ~11,000 locations

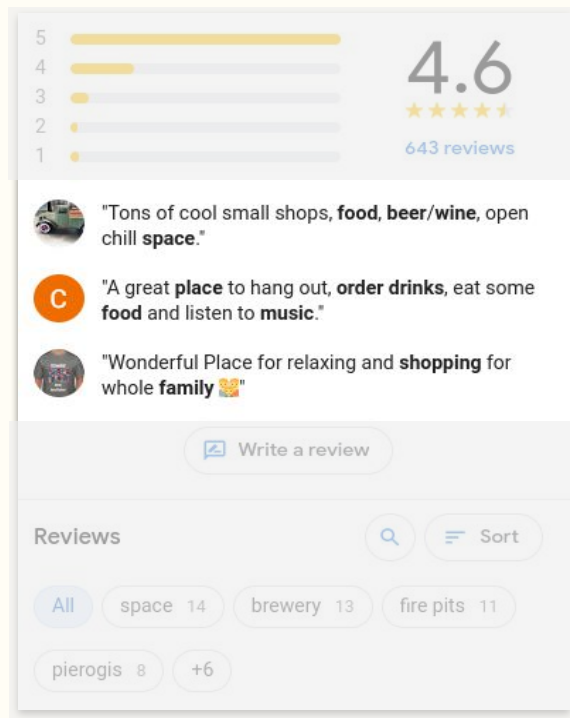
VS.

**Google Maps:**

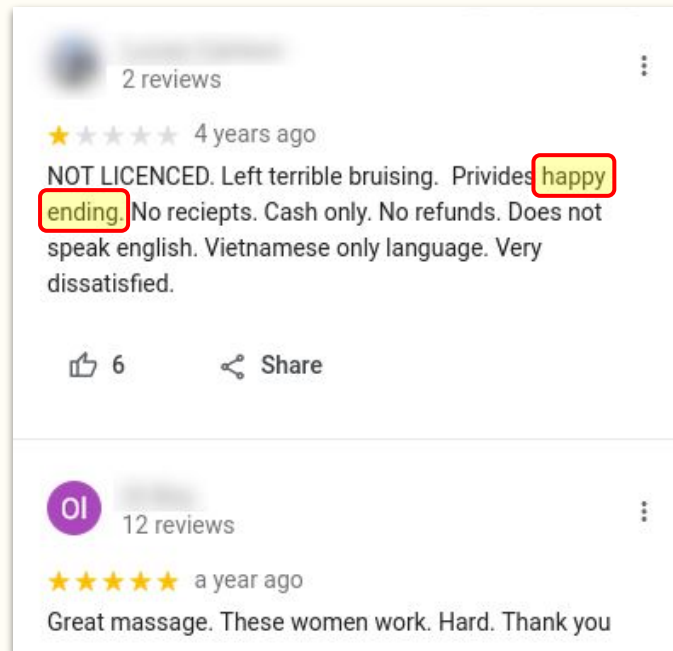
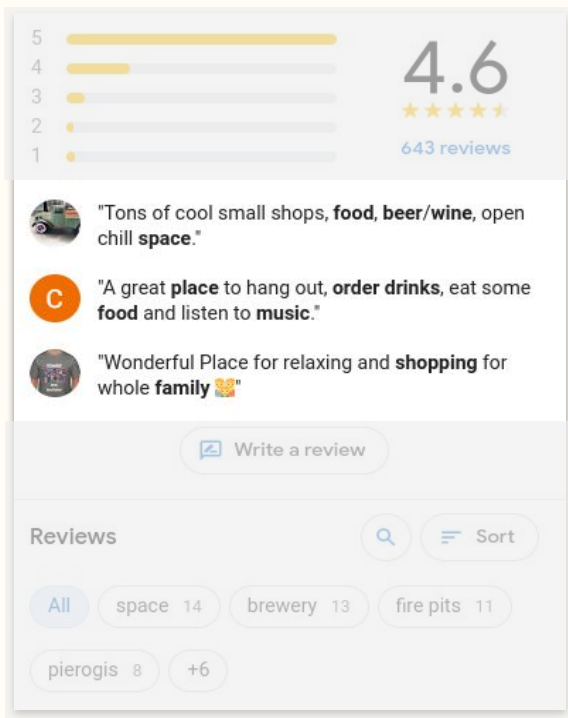




# Feasibility



# Feasibility



- Mapped advertisements, showed different locations (globally) in supply and demand
- Ramchandani, P., Bastani, H., & Wyatt, E. (2021).  
**Unmasking Human Trafficking Risk in Commercial Sex Supply Chains with Machine Learning.** SSRN Electronic Journal.  
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3866259>

Same phone number used in both recruitment and sales

# Related Works -- 2 other classifiers

- Classified Yelp businesses with random forest
  - Maria Diaz and Anand Panangadan. "**Natural language-based integration of online review datasets for identification of sex trafficking businesses.**" IEEE 21st International Conference on Information Reuse and Integration for Data Science (IRI) (2020)
- Classified individual Yelp reviews
  - Ruoting Li, Margaret Tobey, Maria Mayorga, Sherrie Caltagirone, and Osman Ozaltn. "**Detecting human trafficking: Automated classification of online customer reviews of massage businesses.**" SSRN Electronic Journal (2021)
- Demands Estimate
  - Bouche, V., & Crotty, S. M. Estimating demand for illicit massage businesses in Houston, Texas. Journal of Human Trafficking (2018)
- Correlated socioeconomic factors with Rubmaps listings (per county and per census tract) - income, airport dist.
  - Anna White, Seth Guika2ema, and Bridgette Carr. "**Why are you Here? modeling illicit massage business location characteristics with machine learning.**" Journal of Human Trafficking (2021)
- Analyzed (explicit) Rubmaps reviews: correlated text features suggesting trafficking / exploitation
  - Vries, Ieke de and Jason Radford. "**Identifying online risk markers of hard-to-observe crimes through semi-inductive triangulation: The case of human trafficking in the United States.**" The British Journal of Criminology (2021)

# Prior Classifier Limitations

- Limited to cities in 12 states
- Static releases by Yelp

Issue:

- Easy to move across cities, states under law enforcement pressure

# Ground Truth

## Label definition:

1 = a "flagged" a.k.a. **illicit** business

0 = not concerned, a.k.a. a **legal** business

# Ground Truth

- No list of all massage parlors in U.S., let alone all illicit massage parlors
- Instead:  
Use Places API to find co-occurring massage parlors as a negative class
- Co-occurring = Same cities as Rubmaps
- If a business is not listed in Rubmaps, consider it a legal business

## Label definition:

1 = a "flagged" a.k.a. **illicit** business

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# How to get Google Place IDs from Rubmaps?

- Business can change names, address misspellings, etc.
- Use "Find Place" request: Takes text input, returns Place ID(s)  
Put in business name and address
- Final results use Google Places IDs provided by collaborator

**Example:**

## Rubmaps Data

| Business Name | Address                      | Phone #      |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Anytown Spa   | 123 Anystreet<br>Anytown, WI | 987-654-3210 |



## Google Data - Match?

**Name:** Any Town Spa

**Address:** 132 Any St. #3, Anytown, WI

**Place ID:** =3cs34lk8geh



# Listed on Rubmaps: ~4,700 businesses







- Turnover:  
Keep only locations reviewed since since  
**Jan. 1st, 2019** (up until April 1st, 2021)
- Total:  
4,719 businesses
- Cities: ~1,700  
Geocode city name to GPS point

# nearby\_search() for each of ~1,700 cities

- Cities from illicit class
- `places.nearby_search(  
GPS lat, lon  
keyword=message  
type=SPA )`
- Returns 0–20 businesses (ordered by distance)
- Total:  
**17,247 places**

# Subset (API cost) = ~7,000 businesses

- Total:  
17,247 places
- Overlap:  
1,541 places listed in Rubmaps  
(~9 % prevalence)
- Subset to half:  
**7,431 places**

| SKU   | Usage           | Cost     |
|---|-----------------|----------|
|  Atmosphere Data        | 12,310 count    | \$61.55  |
|  Basic Data             | 12,310 count    | \$0.00   |
|  Contact Data           | 12,310 count    | \$36.93  |
|  Geocoding              | 1,809 requests  | \$9.05   |
|  Places - Nearby Search | 1,788 requests  | \$57.22  |
|  Places Details         | 10,522 requests | \$178.87 |

Total: \$344

# Dataset Summary

## Place IDs

- 4,719 positive
- 7,431 negative

**12,150 total**

## place\_details()

- Up to 5 reviews per place
- 55,385 reviews total

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Baseline algorithm:

Always guess most frequent class

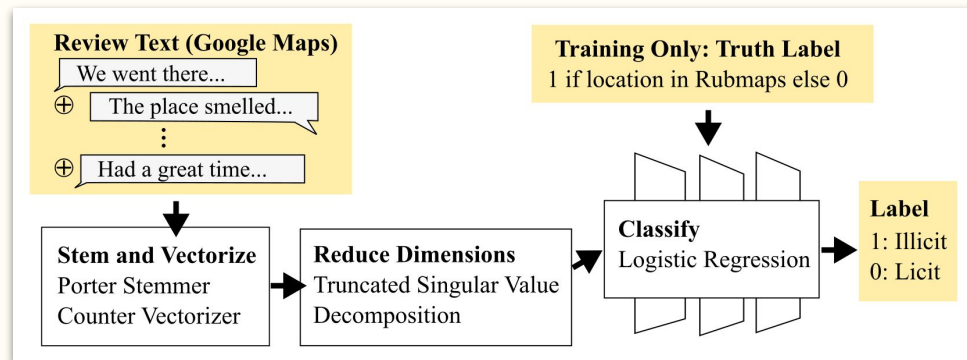
**Null accuracy: 61.2%**

# Methods

- Download review text  
& Clean (pre-process)
- Turn text into numbers (**bag-of-words**)
- Classify into illicit (label 1) or legal (label 0)
- Evaluate with **5-fold cross-validation**

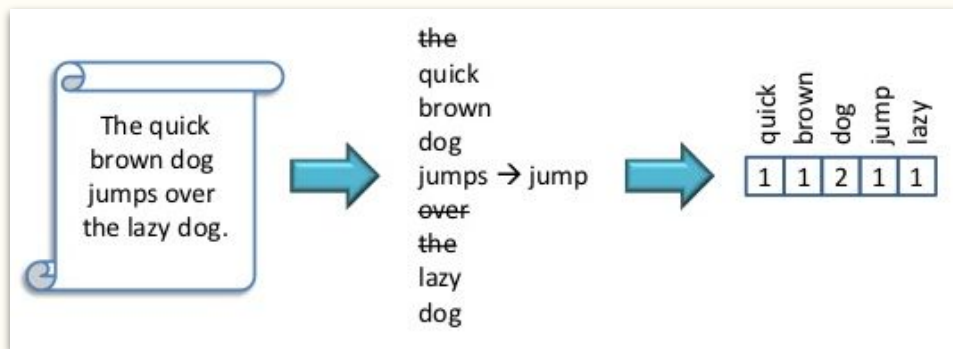
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# Bag-of-Words (a.k.a. Count Vectorizer)

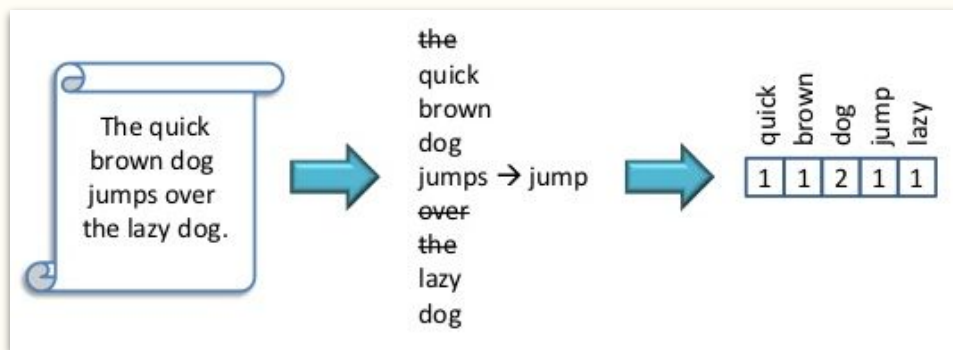
- Tally words
- Order of words doesn't matter





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# Stemming

## Example:

Message, massaged, messages -> massag

- Reduces vocabulary size of BoW

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## Example:

Message, massaged, messages -> massag

- Reduces vocabulary size of BoW

- **Raw:**  
"Happy we went there."  
"The place smelled."  
"Spoke English there."
- **Concatenate:** "Happy we went there The place smelled Spoke English there"
- **Stem:** "happi we went there the place smell spoke english there"

# Evaluation: 5-fold cross-validation

- 80% train, 20% test
- Run five times

# Result: ~80% accuracy

## Metrics

|           |                      |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Accuracy  | 0.794 ( $\pm$ 0.038) |
| Precision | 0.718 ( $\pm$ 0.057) |
| Recall    | 0.797 ( $\pm$ 0.004) |
| F1        | 0.754 ( $\pm$ 0.033) |
| MCC       | 0.586 ( $\pm$ 0.062) |

**MCC** - Matthew's correlation coefficient

Requires good performance on both classes

- -1 or 1 perfect correlation
- 0 random chance

# Result: ~80% accuracy

## Metrics

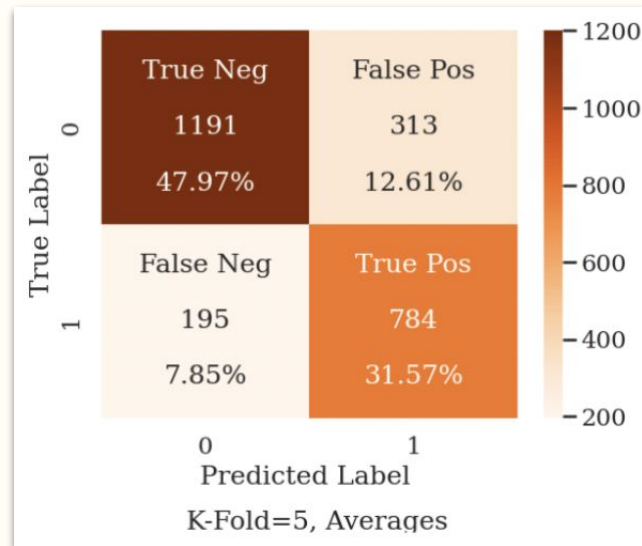
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## Confusion Matrix



# Can we improve? with bigger model

- Transformers architecture
- 66 million parameters  
vs 14,000
- End-to-end model  
Input: Text  
Output: Prediction

# Result: ~80% accuracy still

DistilBERT

| Metric | Accuracy | Precision | Recall | F1    | MCC   |
|--------|----------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
| Value  | 0.789    | 0.729     | 0.725  | 0.727 | 0.555 |

Previous results:

| Bag-of-Words |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
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Hard problem -- likely noise ceiling on data



# Summary: Google Places works

- Bag-of-Words: 80% accuracy
- DistilBERT: 80% accuracy

Caveats:

- Not all places in Rubmaps are illicit

# The Google Places Dataset: Illegal Activity in Plain Sight

## Part I

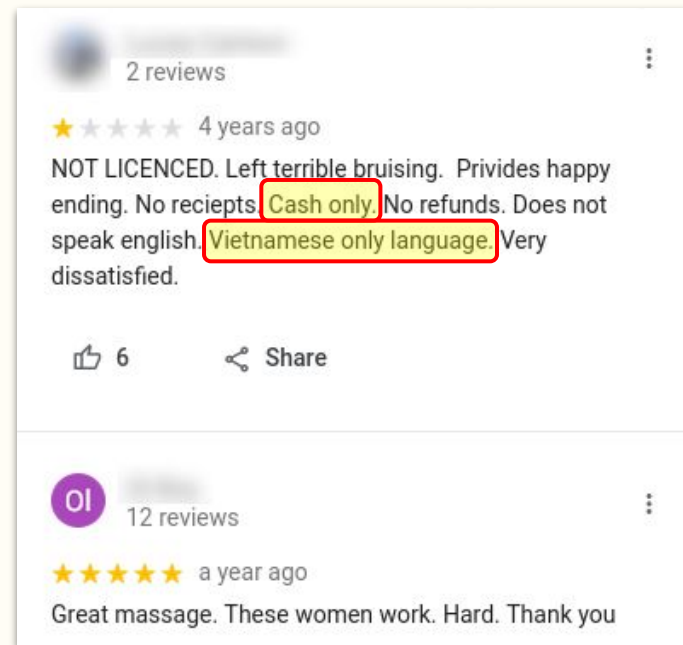
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# Vulnerabilities

- Language barrier, racism
- Labor regulations: hours and pay

Does this vary between illicit and legal locations?



# Named Entity Recognition

Pre-defined list of tags

Apple **ORG**

is looking at buying

U.K. **GPE**

startup for

\$1 billion **MONEY**

Labor:

- **MONEY**: monetary values, including units

Ethnicity:

- **NORP**: Nationalities or religious or political groups
- **LANGUAGE**: Any named language

# Labor & Opening Hours

## Metadata:

### Business opening hours

- Business open 7 days a week
- Open until 9PM or later

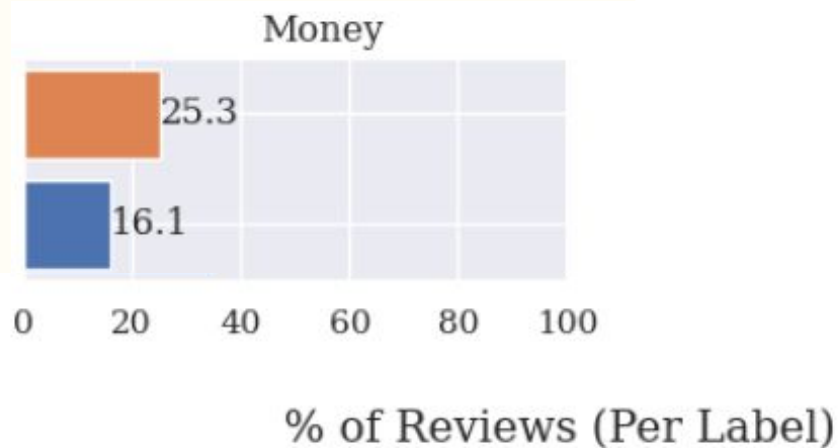
## Features

- MONEY
- ETHNICITY
- OPEN LATE
- OPEN 7 DAYS

# Distribution of NER Features

Class 1 - Illicit

Class 0 - Legal



# Distribution of NER Features

Class 1 - Illicit

Class 0 - Legal



# Distribution of business hours features

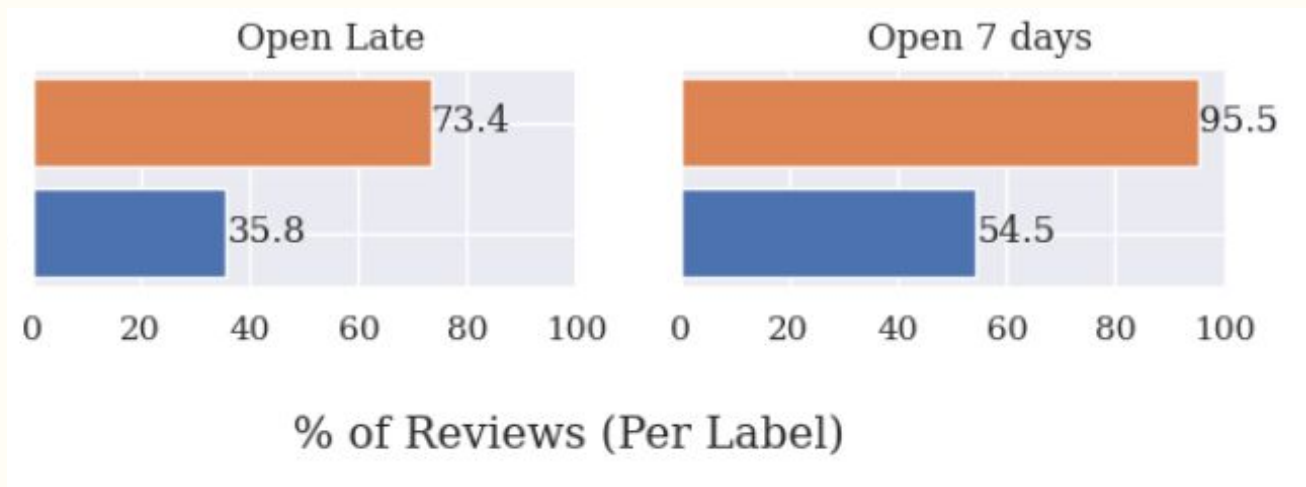




# Distribution of business hours features

Class 1 - Illicit

Class 0 - Legal



# Closer look

|                |       |      |
|----------------|-------|------|
| Hours          | 1 PM  | 18   |
|                | 2 PM  | 42   |
|                | 3 PM  | 54   |
|                | 4 PM  | 122  |
|                | 5 PM  | 493  |
|                | 6 PM  | 701  |
|                | 7 PM  | 826  |
|                | 8 PM  | 855  |
|                | 9 PM  | 1408 |
|                | 10 PM | 920  |
|                | 11 PM | 86   |
|                | 12 AM | 25   |
| Closed All Day |       | 1448 |
| Monday         |       |      |

# Closer look

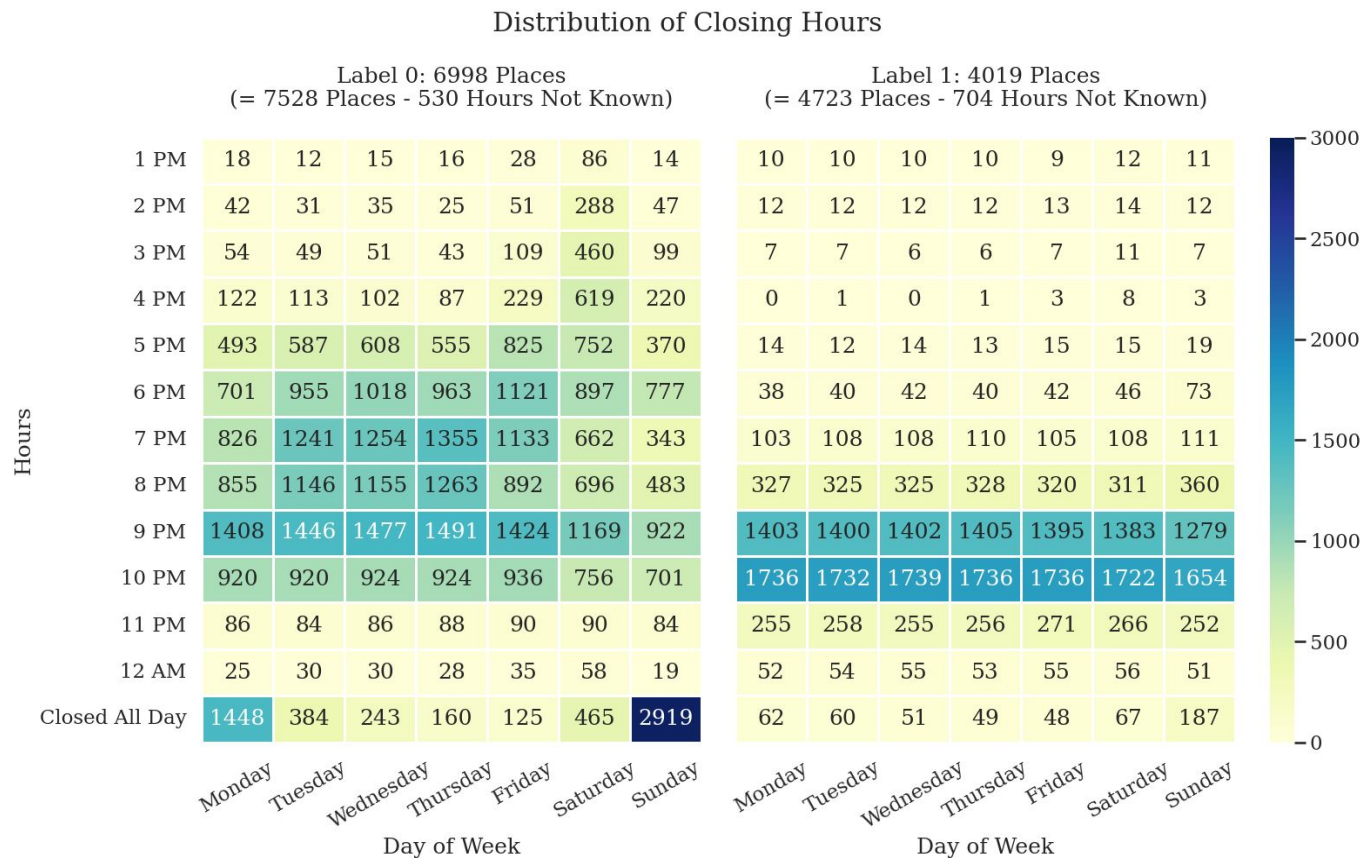
Distribution of Closing Hours

Label 0: 6998 Places  
(= 7528 Places - 530 Hours Not Known)

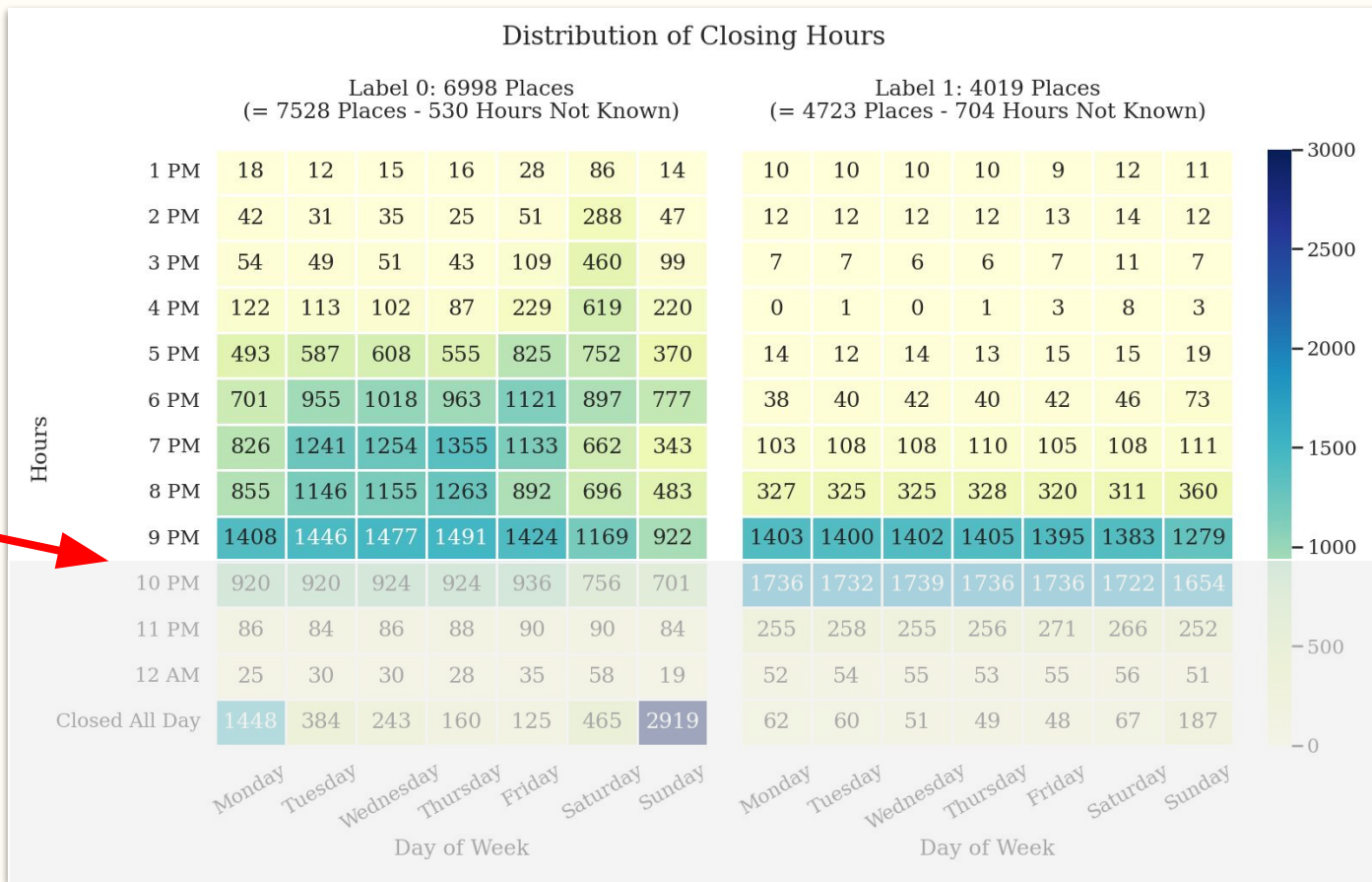
| Hours          | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|----------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| 1 PM           | 18     | 12      | 15        | 16       | 28     | 86       | 14     |
| 2 PM           | 42     | 31      | 35        | 25       | 51     | 288      | 47     |
| 3 PM           | 54     | 49      | 51        | 43       | 109    | 460      | 99     |
| 4 PM           | 122    | 113     | 102       | 87       | 229    | 619      | 220    |
| 5 PM           | 493    | 587     | 608       | 555      | 825    | 752      | 370    |
| 6 PM           | 701    | 955     | 1018      | 963      | 1121   | 897      | 777    |
| 7 PM           | 826    | 1241    | 1254      | 1355     | 1133   | 662      | 343    |
| 8 PM           | 855    | 1146    | 1155      | 1263     | 892    | 696      | 483    |
| 9 PM           | 1408   | 1446    | 1477      | 1491     | 1424   | 1169     | 922    |
| 10 PM          | 920    | 920     | 924       | 924      | 936    | 756      | 701    |
| 11 PM          | 86     | 84      | 86        | 88       | 90     | 90       | 84     |
| 12 AM          | 25     | 30      | 30        | 28       | 35     | 58       | 19     |
| Closed All Day | 1448   | 384     | 243       | 160      | 125    | 465      | 2919   |
| Day of Week    | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |



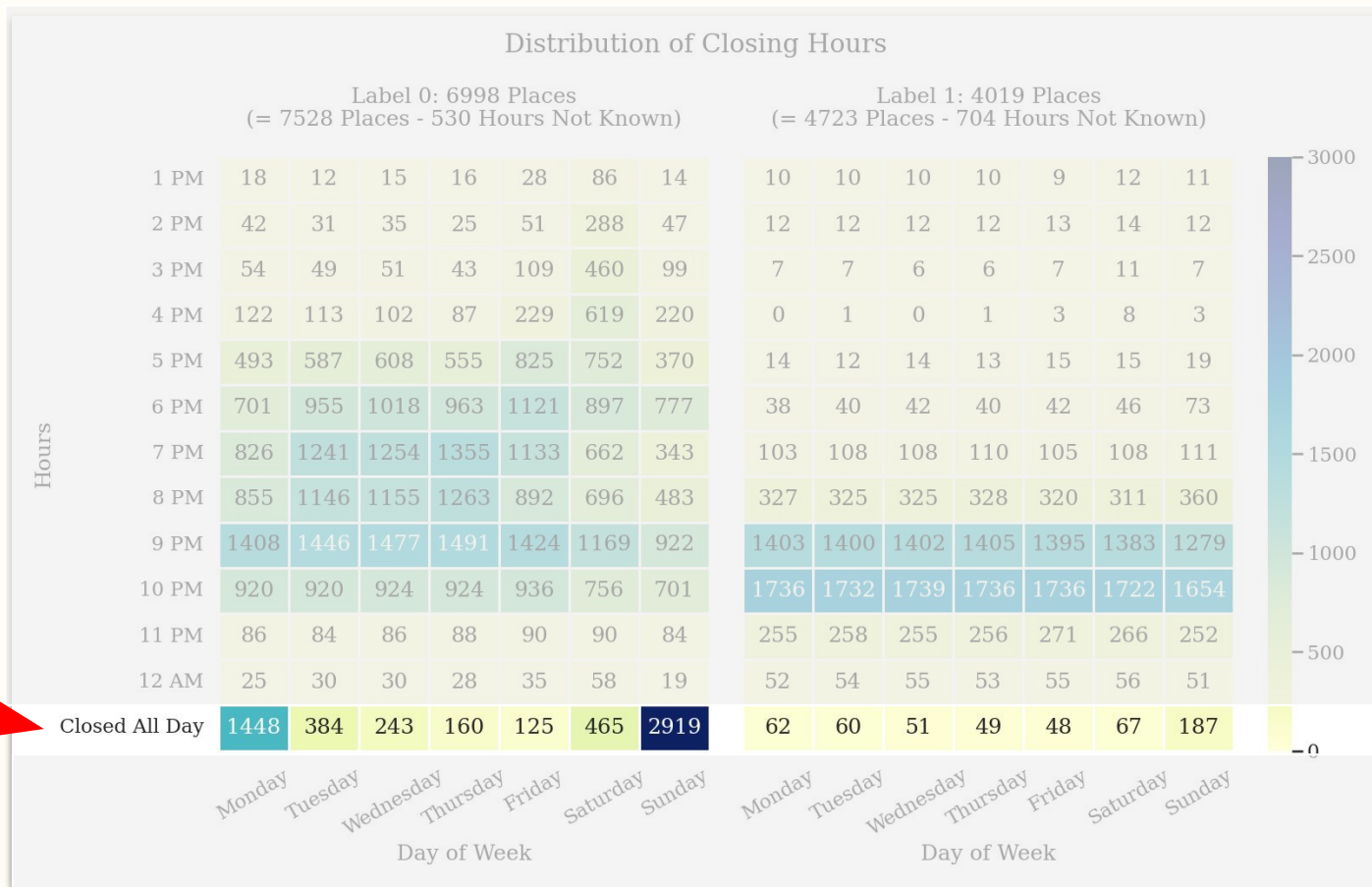
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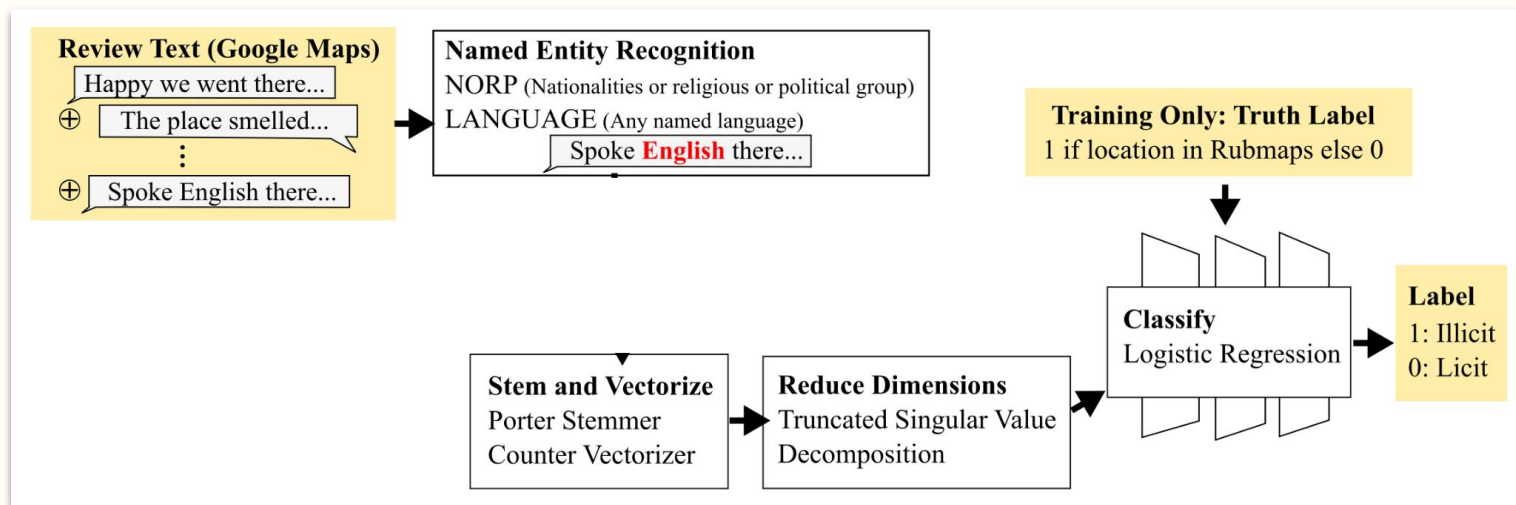
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## Part I

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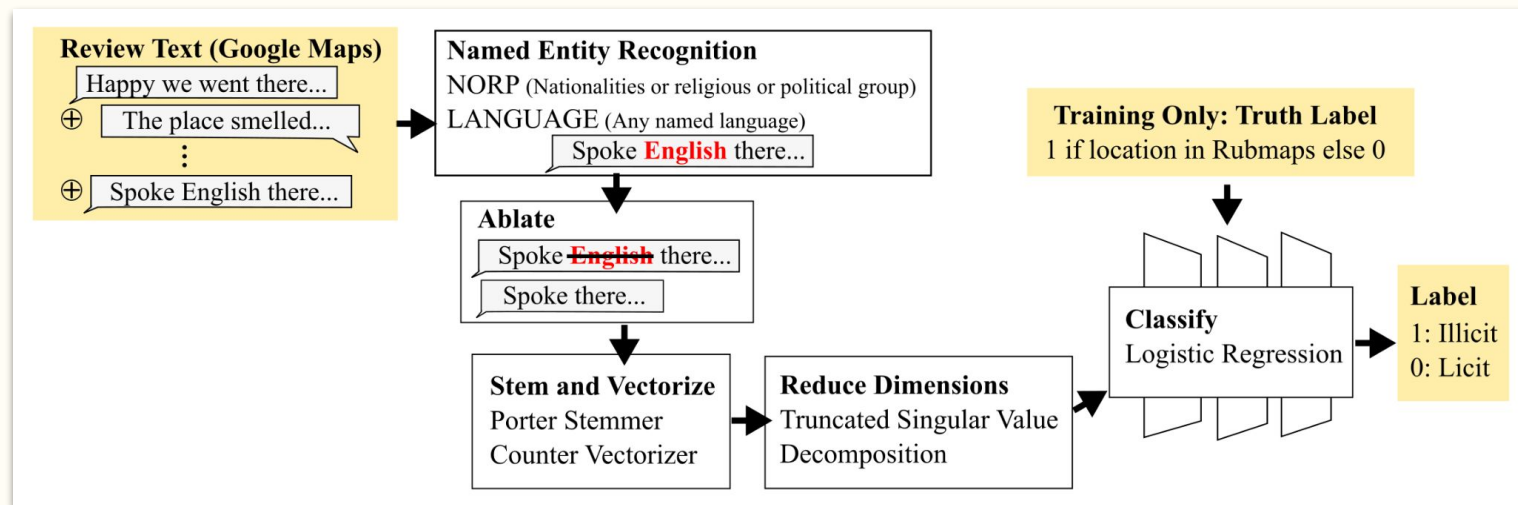
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4. Fairness with Ablation &  
Business Hours

# Fairness by Ablation (Removing Text)





# Fairness by Ablation (Removing Text)



# Ablation Results

5-fold cross-validation

**Before**

|           |                      |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Accuracy  | 0.794 ( $\pm$ 0.038) |
| Precision | 0.718 ( $\pm$ 0.057) |
| Recall    | 0.797 ( $\pm$ 0.004) |
| F1        | 0.754 ( $\pm$ 0.033) |
| MCC       | 0.586 ( $\pm$ 0.062) |

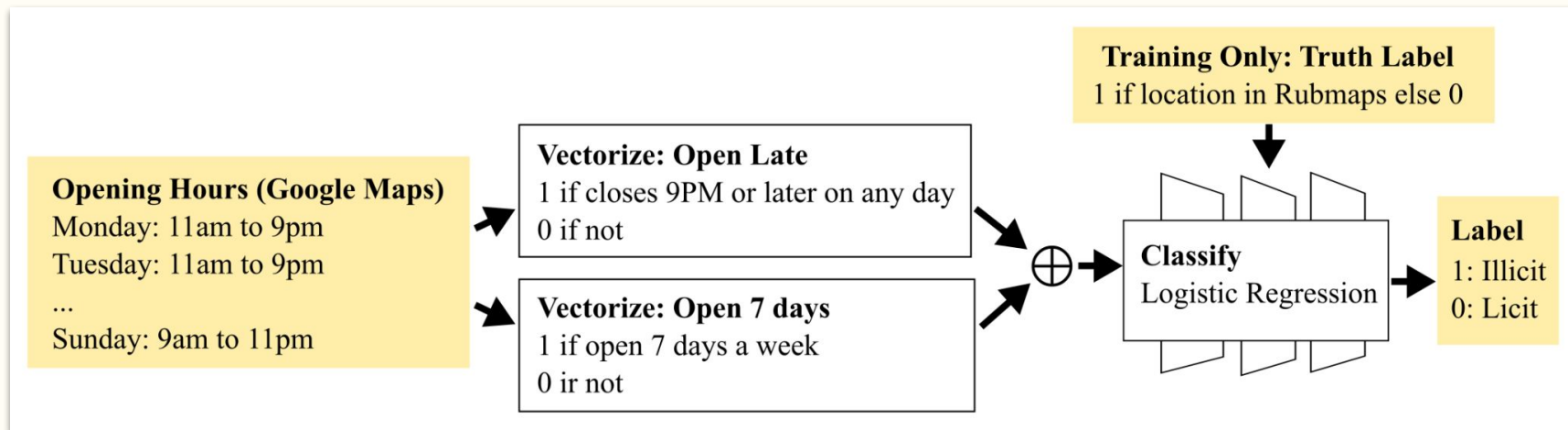
# Ablation Results

5-fold cross-validation

| Before    |                      | After Ablation       |
|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Accuracy  | 0.794 ( $\pm$ 0.038) | 0.794 ( $\pm$ 0.038) |
| Precision | 0.718 ( $\pm$ 0.057) | 0.718 ( $\pm$ 0.057) |
| Recall    | 0.797 ( $\pm$ 0.004) | 0.797 ( $\pm$ 0.004) |
| F1        | 0.754 ( $\pm$ 0.033) | 0.754 ( $\pm$ 0.033) |
| MCC       | 0.586 ( $\pm$ 0.062) | 0.582 ( $\pm$ 0.065) |

- About the same, ~80%

# Hours only?



# Hours only - Results

---

Opening Hours  
(n=2)

---

0.700 ( $\pm$  0.043)

0.595 ( $\pm$  0.051)

0.721 ( $\pm$  0.010)

0.651 ( $\pm$  0.034)

0.399 ( $\pm$  0.072)

---

- Accuracy ~70%

# The Google Places Dataset: Illegal Activity in Plain Sight

## Part I

### Sections

1. Introduction
2. Classifier
3. Vulnerability Insights with  
Named Entity Recognition
4. Fairness with Ablation &  
Business Hours

# Part I. Summary

- **Bag-of-Word Classifier, DistilBERT**

Both ~80% accuracy

- **Vulnerability Insights with Named Entity Recognition**

More likely mention ethnicity, cash, open longer hours / closed less often

- **Fairness with Ablation & Business Hours**

Ablation: Almost no change

Business hours: ~70% accuracy

# Questions?

break



# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

## Part II

Demand



# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

## Part II

### Sections

1. Introduction
2. Case Study: Domains
3. Case Study: Buyer psychology

Aside: Acronym expansion

4. Buyer insights
5. Hackathon

# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

## Part II

### Sections

1. Introduction
2. Case Study: **Monitoring** with domain extraction
3. Case Study: **Reducing demand** with buyer psychology  
    Aside: Acronym expansion
4. Buyer insights
5. **Raising public awareness** with a hackathon

# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

## Part II

### Sections

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# Demand-Side

## Rubmaps

- Paywall for reviews
- Login required for forum

Enter...



# Demand-Side

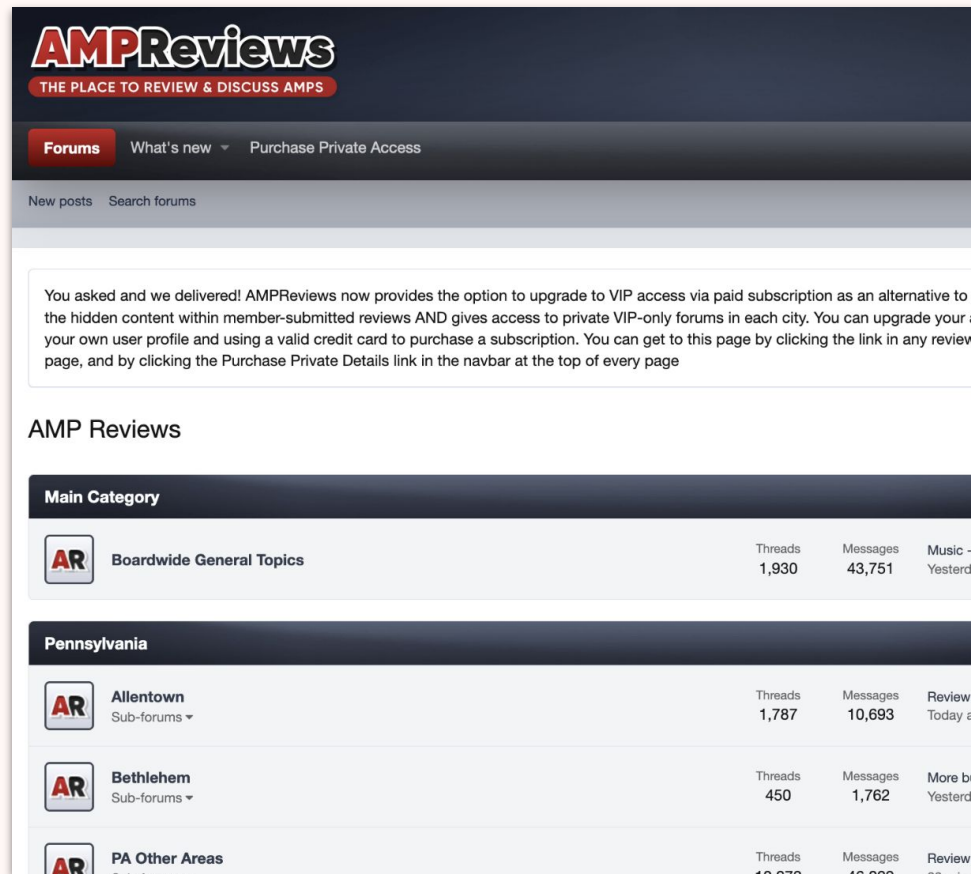
## Rubmaps

- Paywall for reviews
- Login required for forum

Enter...

## AMPReviews Discussion Forum

- Public: internet archive  
Wayback Machine



# Since 2018

- ~620,000 posts
  - 621,636
- ~27,000 users
  - 26,928
- 12 states, ~90k individual visits
  - 90,824

# Within each category...

Reviews / Discussions / Private

Forums > **New York** >

## Manhattan



### Reviews - Manhattan

Threads: 30,098 Messages: 174,693

Review:

41 minutes ago ·



### Discussion - Manhattan

Threads: 6,265 Messages: 75,277

Percentile of men who monger

Today at 5:38 AM ·



### Private - Manhattan

*Private*






# Within each category...

Reviews / Discussions / Private

Forums > **New York** >

## Manhattan

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|  | <b>Reviews - Manhattan</b><br>Threads: 30,098 Messages: 174,693  | Review:<br>41 minutes ago ·                        |
|  | <b>Discussion - Manhattan</b><br>Threads: 6,265 Messages: 75,277 | Percentile of men who monger<br>Today at 5:38 AM · |
|  | <b>Private - Manhattan</b>                                       | Private  |

# Post types

## Reviews - Semi-structured first post



Registered Member  
Messages: 23  
Reviews: 12  
Joined Nov 27, 2018


Nov 14, 2021 #1

**Title:** Review:  **Message:**   
**Date:** Nov 12, 2021  
**Phone:**   
**City:**   
**State:** PA  
**Location:**   
**Age Estimate:**   
**Nationality:**   
**Physical Description:**   
[Click to unlock the hidden Private Details in this review](#)

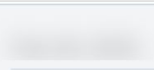
**Recommendation:** Yes


  and 1 other person

## Posts




Review Contributor  
Messages: 95  
Reviews: 9  
Joined Feb 25



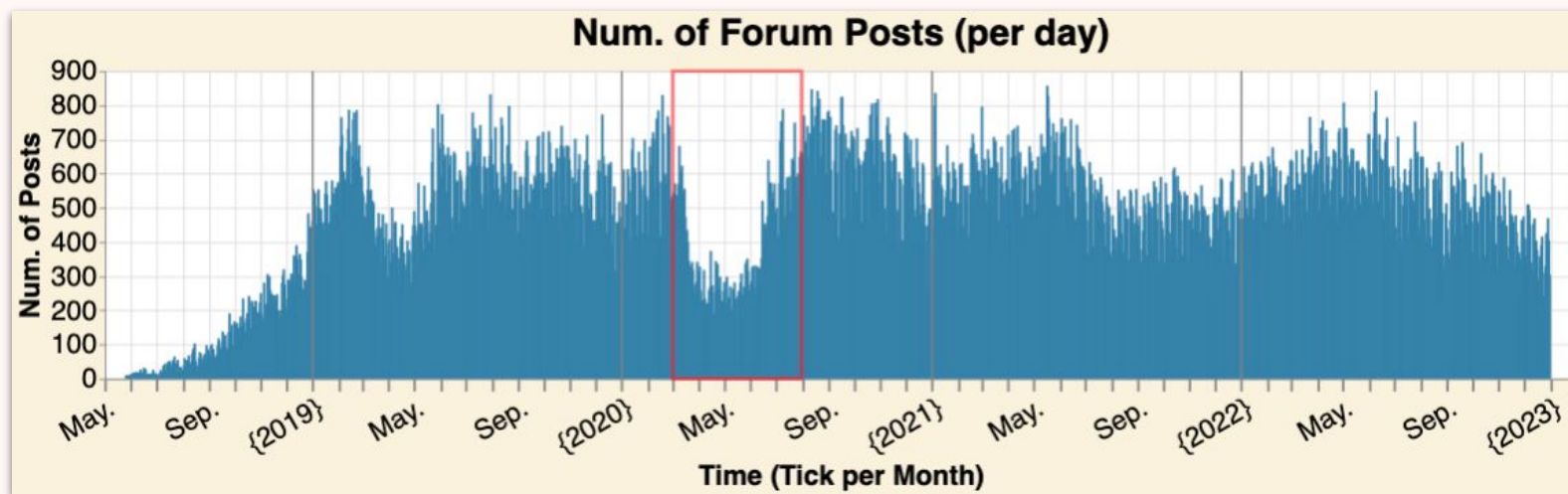
said: 

Just curious. What if they find c

Nothing will happen. At worst

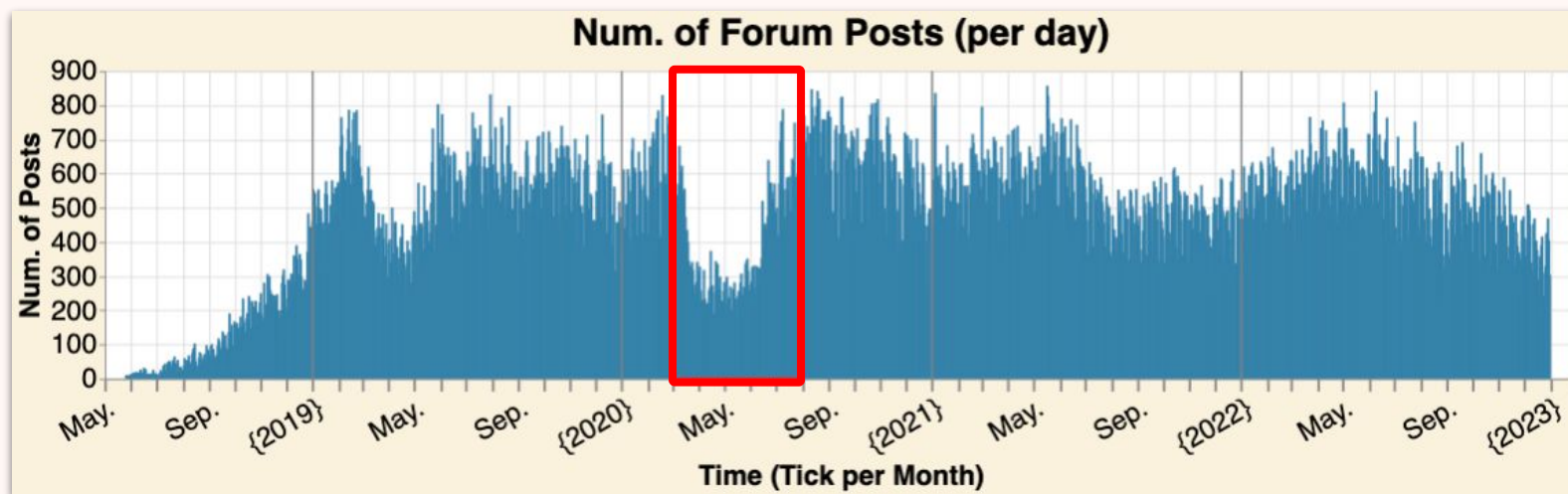
  and

# Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA)



Downtick from COVID

# Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA)



Downtick from COVID

# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

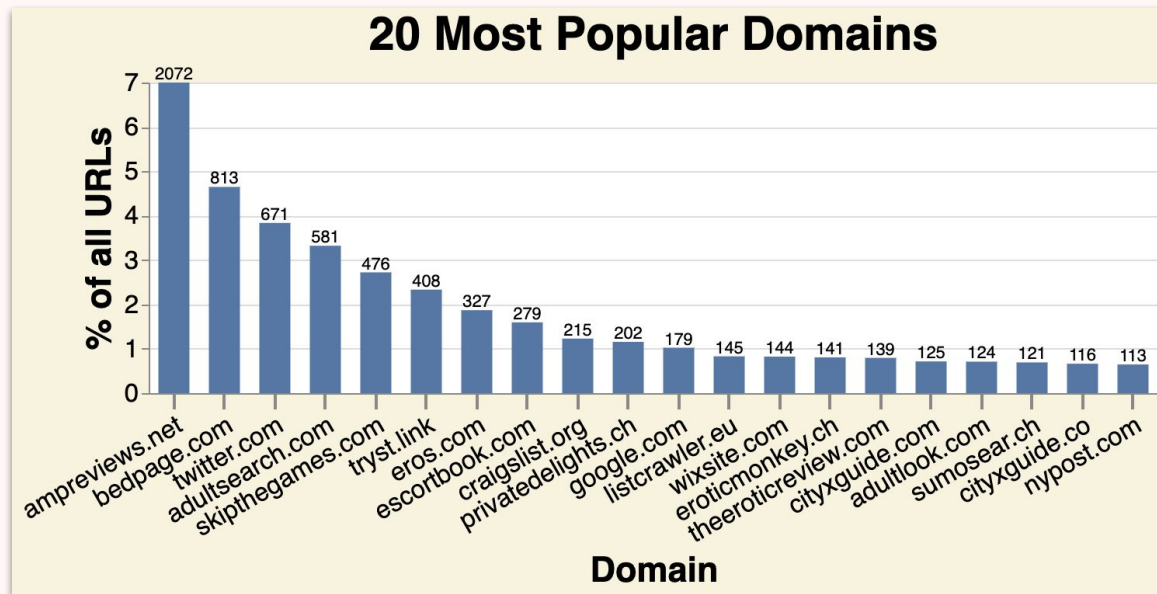
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# Monitoring: What are the top domains?

- Extract from HTML tags
- Prune to top-level domain



# Split by Time

- Top 5 remain stable

| 2018-2020 | url                              | counts | %     |  | 2021-2023 | url                              | counts | %     |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--------|-------|--|-----------|----------------------------------|--------|-------|
| 1         | <a href="#">ampreviews.net</a>   | 867    | 11.03 |  | 1         | <a href="#">ampreviews.net</a>   | 1103   | 11.93 |
| 2         | <a href="#">bedpage.com</a>      | 300    | 3.82  |  | 2         | <a href="#">bedpage.com</a>      | 510    | 5.52  |
| 3         | <a href="#">twitter.com</a>      | 265    | 3.37  |  | 3         | <a href="#">twitter.com</a>      | 402    | 4.35  |
| 4         | <a href="#">adultsearch.com</a>  | 249    | 3.17  |  | 4         | <a href="#">adultsearch.com</a>  | 327    | 3.54  |
| 5         | <a href="#">skipthegames.com</a> | 149    | 1.90  |  | 5         | <a href="#">skipthegames.com</a> | 320    | 3.46  |

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| 6         | <a href="#">eros.com</a>           | 142    | 1.81  |  | 6         | <a href="#">tryst.link</a>          | 292    | 3.16  |
| 7         | <a href="#">cityxguide.com</a>     | 125    | 1.59  |  | 7         | <a href="#">escortbook.com</a>      | 217    | 2.35  |
| 8         | <a href="#">google.com</a>         | 122    | 1.55  |  | 8         | <a href="#">eros.com</a>            | 177    | 1.91  |
| 9         | <a href="#">cityxguide.co</a>      | 116    | 1.48  |  | 9         | <a href="#">craigslist.org</a>      | 177    | 1.91  |
| 10        | <a href="#">tryst.link</a>         | 104    | 1.32  |  | 10        | <a href="#">privatedelights.ch</a>  | 176    | 1.90  |
| 11        | <a href="#">eroticmonkey.ch</a>    | 82     | 1.04  |  | 11        | <a href="#">listcrawler.eu</a>      | 126    | 1.36  |
| 12        | <a href="#">nypost.com</a>         | 68     | 0.86  |  | 12        | <a href="#">theeroticreview.com</a> | 119    | 1.29  |
| 13        | <a href="#">switter.at</a>         | 65     | 0.83  |  | 13        | <a href="#">sumosear.ch</a>         | 106    | 1.15  |
| 14        | <a href="#">flushingincall.com</a> | 62     | 0.79  |  | 14        | <a href="#">wixsite.com</a>         | 92     | 1.00  |
| 15        | <a href="#">wikipedia.org</a>      | 60     | 0.76  |  | 15        | <a href="#">adultlook.com</a>       | 86     | 0.93  |
| 16        | <a href="#">cityxguide.photo</a>   | 58     | 0.74  |  | 16        | <a href="#">peach.cafe</a>          | 80     | 0.87  |
| 17        | <a href="#">pornhub.com</a>        | 54     | 0.69  |  | 17        | <a href="#">instagram.com</a>       | 65     | 0.70  |
| 18        | <a href="#">tnaboard.com</a>       | 53     | 0.67  |  | 18        | <a href="#">archive.org</a>         | 59     | 0.64  |
| 19        | <a href="#">business.site</a>      | 48     | 0.61  |  | 19        | <a href="#">ephillym.com</a>        | 57     | 0.62  |
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# Split by Time

- Top 5 remain stable
- Cityxguide disappears

| 2018-2020 | url                                | counts | %     |  | 2021-2023 | url                                 | counts | %     |
|-----------|------------------------------------|--------|-------|--|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|-------|
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# Split by Time

- Top 5 remain stable
- Cityxguide disappears
- Escortbook moves up

| 2018-2020 | url                | counts | %     |  | 2021-2023 | url                 | counts | %     |
|-----------|--------------------|--------|-------|--|-----------|---------------------|--------|-------|
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# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

## Part II

### Sections

1. Introduction
2. Case Study: **Monitoring** with domain extraction
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Aside: Acronym expansion
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# Reducing Demand with Buyer Psychology

- What are the top concerns of buyers?
  - Law Enforcement
  - STDs
  - ...
  - Relationships?
- Claims: most are married

# Reducing Demand with Buyer Psychology

- What are the top concerns of buyers?
  - Law Enforcement
  - STDs
  - ...
  - Relationships?
- Claims: most are married

“I recently got caught by her [...] it really tore up our marriage, but I was able to fix it and we worked things out, now I don't care to venture around or monger. I know the consequences [...] I am just to (sic) afraid of losing my SO and much more. So I would advise if yall continue to do it, do it very discreetly, change your clothings, use non scented soaps/lotions

# Preliminary Investigation

- Traditional method:  
Manual coding
- New method:  
Word embeddings / topic models
- Word2Vec



# Word2Vec

- Predict context of words
- e.g. given "The cat is " → red, black

## Trained on my data

- Custom pre-processing
  - Strip punctuation (S.O. → SO)
  - Kept capitalization (SO ≠ so)
  - Fewer stop words (and, the, so)
  - Kept words of length two



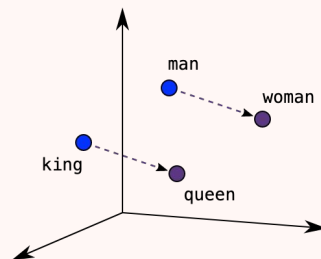
# Word2Vec

- Predict context of words
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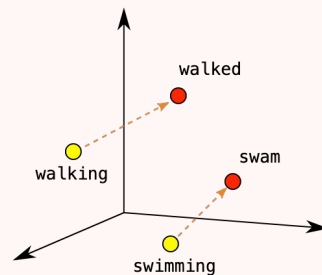
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- Custom pre-processing
  - Strip punctuation (S.O. → SO)
  - Kept capitalization (SO ≠ so)
  - Fewer stop words (and, the, so)
  - Kept words of length two

## Vectors: Distance and direction



Male-Female



Verb Tense



# Seed words

- **Negative sentiments:**
  - **worry**
  - **anxiety**



# Seed words

- **Negative sentiments:**
  - **worry**
  - **anxiety**
- Hypothesized concerns:
  - SO (for significant other)
  - marriage
- Other concerns:
  - LEO (for law enforcement officer)
  - STD (sexually transmitted disease)
- Control words:
  - provider
  - parking
  - table

# Seed words

- **Negative sentiments:**
  - **worry**
  - **anxiety**
- Hypothesized concerns:
  - SO (for significant other)
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- Other concerns:
  - LEO (for law enforcement officer)
  - STD (sexually transmitted disease)
- Control words:
  - provider
  - parking
  - table

- Hypothesis:  
distance\_worry(marriage)  
 $\approx$   
distance\_worry(LEO)  
 $>$   
distance\_worry(table)

# Seed words

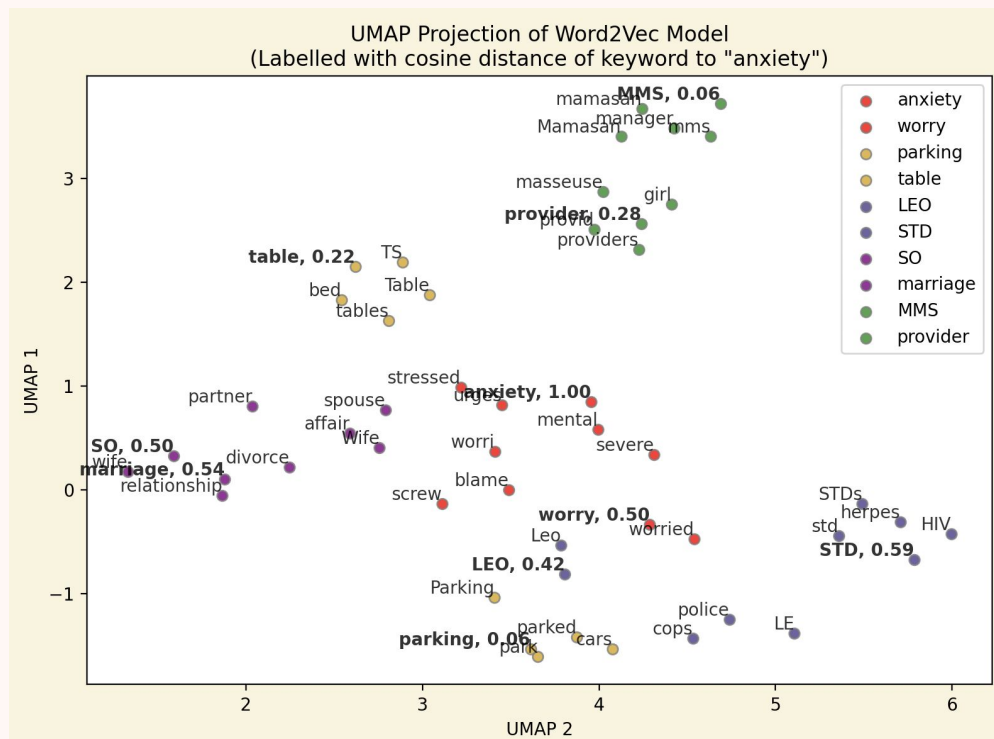
- **Negative sentiments:**
  - worry
  - anxiety
- Hypothesized concerns:
  - SO (for significant other)
  - marriage
- Other concerns:
  - LEO (for law enforcement officer)
  - STD (sexually transmitted disease)
- Control words:
  - provider
  - parking
  - table

- Hypothesis:
$$\text{distance\_worry}(\text{marriage}) \approx \text{distance\_worry}(\text{LEO}) > \text{distance\_worry}(\text{table})$$

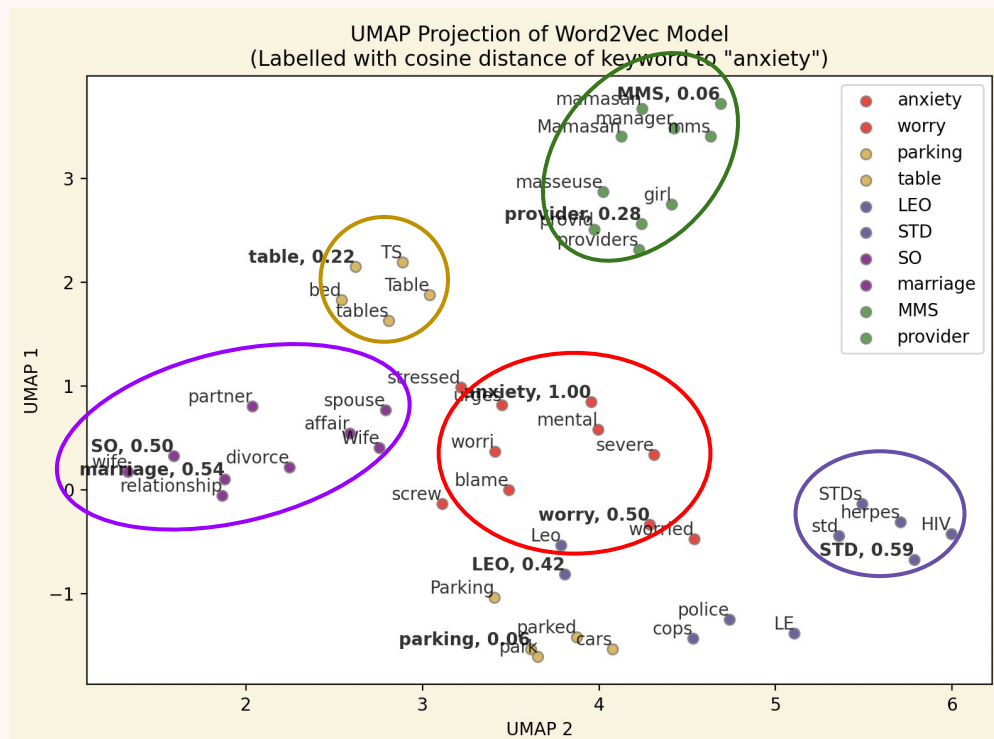
For visualization:

- Find closest 5 words in word embedding space

## Project to lower dimension



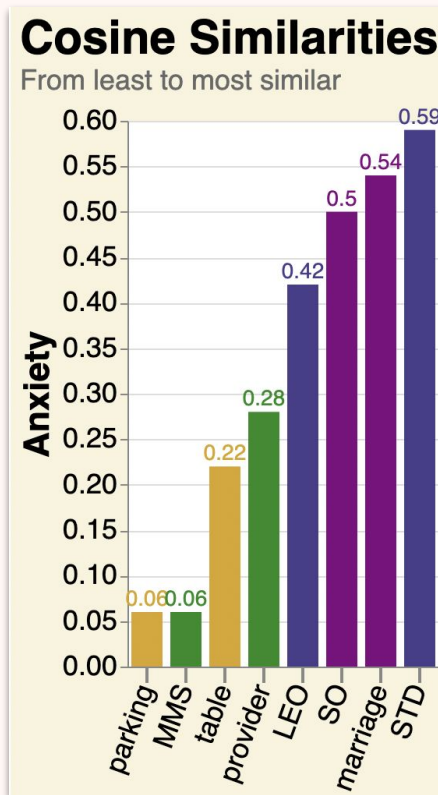
# Project to lower dimension



Not visually conclusive

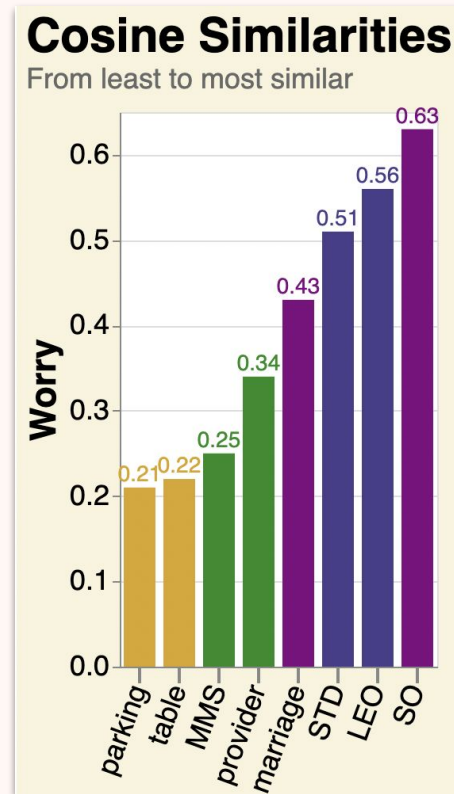
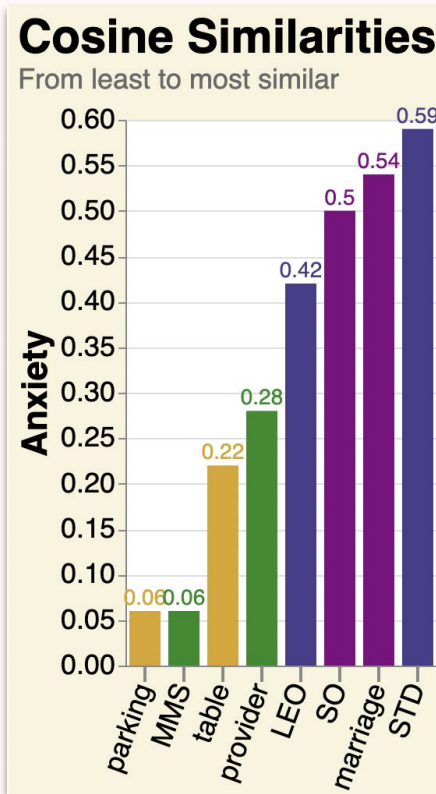
# Directly graph seed words

- Distance from "anxiety", "worry"



# Directly graph seed words

- Distance from "anxiety", "worry"





# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

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# Aside: Acronyms!

A lot of acronyms used:

what does "mms" stand for in "once the mms trusts you"

# Aside: Word embeddings are interesting

A lot of acronyms used:

NR

what does "mms" stand for in "once the mms trusts you"



Without additional context, it is difficult to determine the exact meaning of "mms" in the given phrase "once the mms trusts you." "MMS" can stand for various things depending on the context. In some contexts, "MMS" may refer to Multimedia Messaging Service, which is a method of sending multimedia content such as images, videos, and audio messages through mobile phones. In other contexts, "MMS" can refer to a person's name or initials. It is possible that "MMS" is being used as an

# Word2Vec embeddings

Nearest to "MMS":

- mms = 0.89
- **mamasan** = **0.83**,
- manager = 0.80,
- Mamasan = 0.76

# Retrain word2vec with bigrams

Bigrams are constructed with underscores

- happy\_ending  
happy ending  
HE

- Can expand two-letter initialisms, e.g.  
HE

```
def find_abbreviation(query, model):  
    similar_words = model.wv.most_similar(query, topn=50)  
    for phrase, _ in similar_words:  
        inits = [word[0] for word in phrase.split('_')]  
        candidate = ''.join(inits).upper()  
        if query.upper() == candidate:  
            print(f'{query=}, {phrase=} \t {query} means: {phrase.replace("_", " ")}')  
            break
```

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# Buyer Insights

- How much are buyers spending?
- How frequently do they go?

# Buyer Insights

- How much are buyers spending?
- How frequently do they go?

|                                |                      |                     |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| So who spent how much in 2022? | mine was around 6150 | around 8 k per year |
|                                | 15k+                 | 30k                 |



# Buyer Insights

- How much are buyers spending?
- How frequently do they go?

|                                |                      |                     |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| So who spent how much in 2022? | mine was around 6150 | around 8 k per year |
|                                | 15k+                 | 30k                 |



Review Contributor  
Messages: 131  
Reviews: 23  
Joined Mar 27, 2019

Apr 5, 2023

Probably 40k

Apr 3, 2023

From my peak of 6-7k per year, I dropped to less than 2k this year.

# Buyer Insights

- How much are buyers spending?
- How frequently do they go?

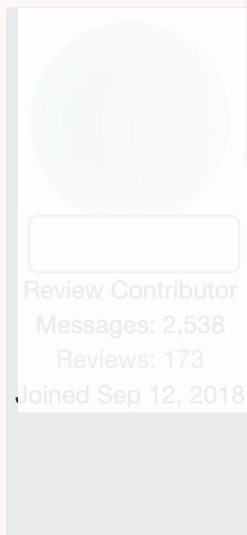
|                                      |  |                         |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| So who spent how much in 2022?       | mine was around 6150                                   | around 8 k per year     |
|                                      | 15k+   | 30k                     |
| How many times do you visit a month? | used to do once a week                                 | I binge while traveling |
|                                      | Averaging 3 times a week and go to 4 only on occasions |                         |



# Buyer Insights

- How much are buyers spending?
- How frequently do they go?

|                                      |  |                         |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| So who spent how much in 2022?       | mine was around 6150                                   | around 8 k per year     |
|                                      | 15k+   | 30k                     |
| How many times do you visit a month? | used to do once a week                                 | I binge while traveling |
|                                      | Averaging 3 times a week and go to 4 only on occasions |                         |



to an AMV. Once a week is not additive unless you are not financially stable enough to afford it. If that is the case, then I would tell you to lay off any extracurricular activity(s) until your finances are in order.

I have no other activities demanding time or money, and many of the extra curricular activities are house remodeling and/or maintenance.

Personally, I would like to sell the house so I can have more free time and money for AMPS.

# Buyer Demographics

- Income
  - Above average
- Age
  - “I am almost 40 and have been mongering since my early 20s”
  - “If they are 45, they are still 25 years younger than me”
  - “been there a couple times when I was in grad school”
- Occupation
  - “I work: in finance and logistics, in a medical setting, in pharmaceutical consulting, in tech
  - “Being in banking for over 30 years [...]”

# Buyer Stereotypes

Commonly white male, but ...

- Ethnicity
  - “I’m ½ Chinese/Korean” “I’m Hispanic”
- Gender
  - “I saw a female monger on rubmaps that contributes reviews quite often”

Username

有钱

田田

스피

오

이

Name: author

# Buyer Stereotypes

Commonly white male, but ...

- Ethnicity
  - “I’m ½ Chinese/Korean” “I’m Hispanic”
- Gender
  - “I saw a female monger on rubmaps that contributes reviews quite often”
- Relationship status
  - “married once , never again. [...] I have my adult children & grand-children”
  - “If I had to guess, 85%+ of mongers are married or in a committed relationship”

Username

有钱

田田

스피

오

이

Name: author

# There is more information...

Reviews / Discussions / Private

Forums > **New York** >

## Manhattan



### Reviews - Manhattan

Threads: 30,098 Messages: 174,693

Review:

41 minutes ago ·



### Discussion - Manhattan

Threads: 6,265 Messages: 75,277

Percentile of men who monger

Today at 5:38 AM ·



### Private - Manhattan




*Private*

# There is more information...

Reviews / Discussions / Private

Forums > **New York** >

## Manhattan

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|  | <b>Reviews - Manhattan</b><br>Threads: 30,098 Messages: 174,693  | Review:<br>41 minutes ago · [redacted]                        |
|  | <b>Discussion - Manhattan</b><br>Threads: 6,265 Messages: 75,277 | Percentile of men who monger<br>Today at 5:38 AM · [redacted] |
|  | <b>Private - Manhattan</b>                                       | Private   |



# Post types

## Reviews - Semi-structured first post



Registered Member  
Messages: 23  
Reviews: 12  
Joined Nov 27, 2018


Nov 14, 2021 #1

**Title:** Review:  **Message:**   
**Date:** Nov 12, 2021  
**Phone:**   
**City:**   
**State:** PA  
**Location:**   
**Age Estimate:**   
**Nationality:**   
**Physical Description:**   
[Click to unlock the hidden Private Details in this review](#)


**Recommendation:** Yes

  and 1 other person

## Posts




Review Contributor  
Messages: 95  
Reviews: 9  
Joined Feb 25

said: 

Just curious. What if they find c

Nothing will happen. At worst

  and

# The Forum Dataset: Two Case Studies and a Hackathon

## Part II

### Sections

1. Introduction
2. Case Study: **Monitoring** with domain extraction
3. Case Study: **Reducing demand** with buyer psychology  
Aside: Acronym expansion
4. Buyer insights
5. **Raising public awareness** with a hackathon

# Raising Awareness with Hackathons


- Kaggle Competitions
- First step: Open datasets!

- MPForum dataset at:


<https://kaggle.com/datasets/34ab6a6b2f6166fe59b77815e3922f1f835770d08bd827bab7bb4e9d31bbd4b>

Active ✕ Getting Started ✕

### Results

**Titanic - Machine Learning from Disaster**

Start here! Predict survival on the Titanic and get familiar with ML ba...  
Getting Started · 14503 Teams · Ongoing

**House Prices - Advanced Regression Techniques**

Predict sales prices and practice feature engineering, RFs, and gradi...  
Getting Started · 4029 Teams · Ongoing

# May 8th, 2023

## Hackathon trial run

## Keynote Speaker: Julie Braun



### Keynote by Julie Braun

Our keynote speaker is **Julie Braun** who serves as the **Policy Initiatives Advisor at the Wisconsin Department of Justice**. Mrs. Braun has 25+ years of high-level public policy experience specializing in victims' rights, public safety, and human trafficking policy. Her full bio can be found later in the page.

### Schedule

| Time        | Event   | Notes   |
|-------------|---|---|
| 5 - 5:20 PM | Keynote Speaker                                 | <b>Julie Braun</b><br>Policy Initiatives Advisor at the Wisconsin Department of Justice |
| 5:20 - 5:40 | Introduction to Problem Area / Ethics / Dataset | Dataset will be hosted on Kaggle  |
| 5:40 - 6    | Form teams of 2-3                               | (There'll be a data science workshop/tutorial if helpful)                               |
| 6 - 7       | Hack !  | 🍳🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌   |
| 7 - 7:30    | Intermission: Pizza Hang-out                    | 🍕 Free pizza time! (Also, pitch your research if you'd like)                            |
| 7:30 - 8:30 | Hack !  | 🍳🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌   |
| 8:30 - 8:50 | Presentations                                   | 👁️  |
| 8:50 - 9    | Judges & Audience Vote                          | 🏆   |
| 9 - 9:30    | (Optional) Celebratory desserts                 | 🍰   |

# Next HackHT: Oct 21st, 2023 Kickoff

Go to [hack4fem.github.io](https://hack4fem.github.io) to get email updates

- Sign-ups open at the end of September

Also looking for co-organizers :)

## Existing Collaborators



HARVARD  
UNIVERSITY



Massachusetts  
Institute of  
Technology

THE**NETWORK**



Traffik Analysis Hub



WI Department of Justice  
Office of Crime Victim Services



# My Research Journey & Conclusion

## Part III

### Sections

1. My research journey:  
| Scotiabank | Digger Finger |  
| Fiducial Force Sensor |
2. Call-to-Action
3. Acknowledgements

# My Research Journey & Conclusion

## Part III

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| Fiducial Force Sensor |
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# Banks & Synthetic Transaction Data

- Bank Regulation
  - Hundred of millions of dollars in fines
- Use rules-based system
- 98% false positives
- Adopt machine learning
  - Synthetic data: good for class balance (low incidence outliers)
  - Good for continuing education
  - and Hackathons
- Evaluate graph algorithm -- vary label sparsity

## Agent-Based Models



# Two Agent Types, Normal and Suspicious



13 Transactional activity largely occurs outside of normal business operating hours (e.g., an establishment that operates during the day has a large number of transactions at night), is almost always made in cash, and deposits are larger than what is expected for the business and the size of its operations.

- FinCEN: U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network  
<https://www.fincen.gov/sites/default/files/advisory/FIN-2014-A008.pdf>
- FINTRAC: Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre (Canada)  
<https://www.fintrac-canafe.gc.ca/intel/operation/oai-hts-2021-eng>

# Agents

- Two types: Normal and Suspicious

- Vary mean time of day

$$\mu_{hr,N} = 12$$

$$\mu_{hr,S} = 22$$

- Vary homophily:

Transact more with same type agent

$$P_{S,S} = 0.7$$

$$P_{S,N} = 0.3$$

# Agents & Results

- Two types: Normal and Suspicious

- Vary mean time of day

$$\mu_{hr,N} = 12$$

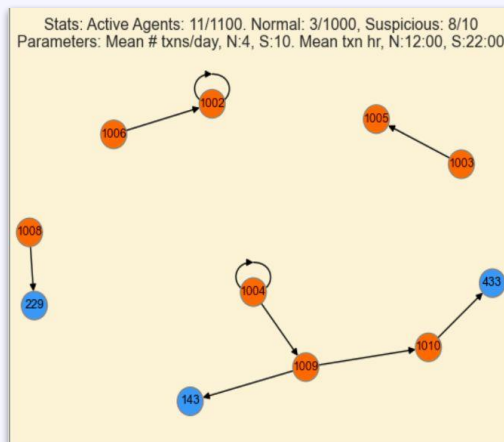
$$\mu_{hr,S} = 22$$

- Vary homophily:  
Transact more with same type agent

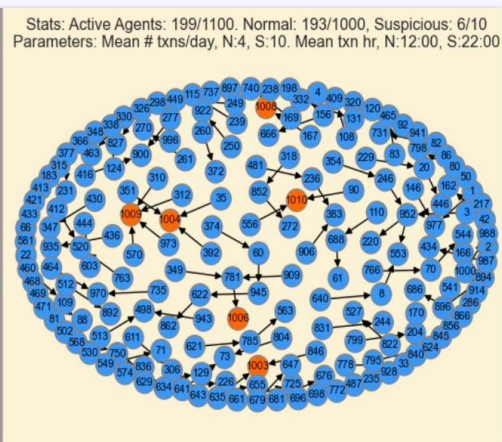
$$P_{S,S} = 0.7$$

$$P_{S,N} = 0.3$$

Midnight



8 AM



[github.com/nro-bot/fake-banking-data](https://github.com/nro-bot/fake-banking-data)

# Digger Finger: GelSight Tactile Sensor for Object Identification Inside Granular Media

Radhen Patel, Branden Romero, Rui Ouyang, Edward Adelson  
17th International Symposium on Experimental Robotics (ISER) 2020



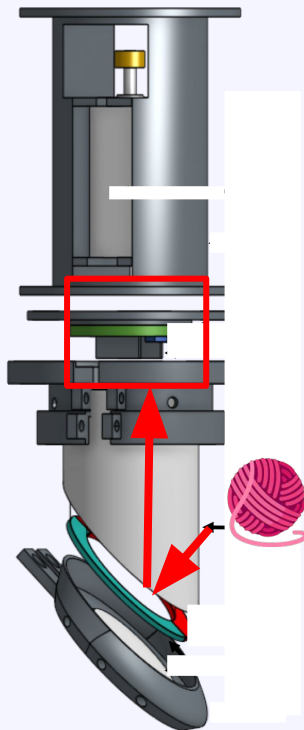
# Digger Finger: GelSight Tactile Sensor for Object Identification Inside Granular Media

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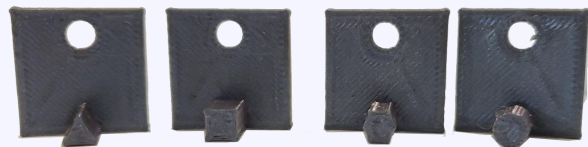
- Small
- Vibrator Motor
- Wedge-shaped
- Integrated sensor



# Digger Finger: GelSight Tactile Sensor for Object Identification Inside Granular Media



# Digger Finger: GelSight Tactile Sensor for Object Identification Inside Granular Media



# Low-Cost Fiducial-Based 6-Axis Force-Torque Sensor

Rui Ouyang, Robert Howe

IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) 2020

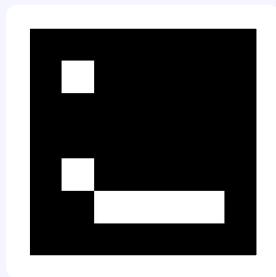




# Low-Cost Fiducial-Based 6-Axis Force-Torque Sensor

or "Fiducial Force Sensor" for short

Fiducials



Vector

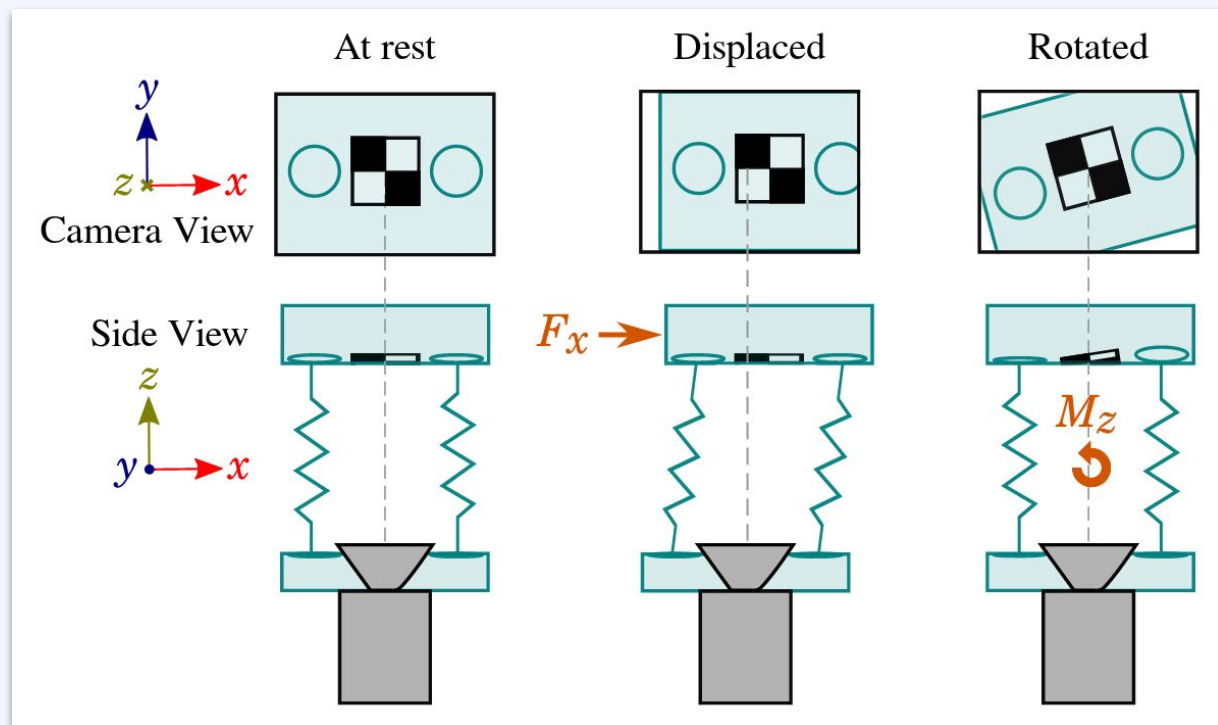


Printed

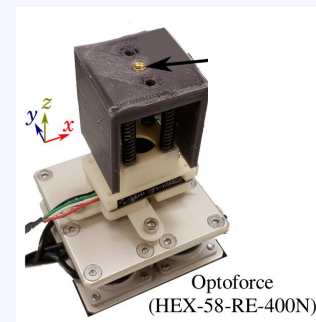
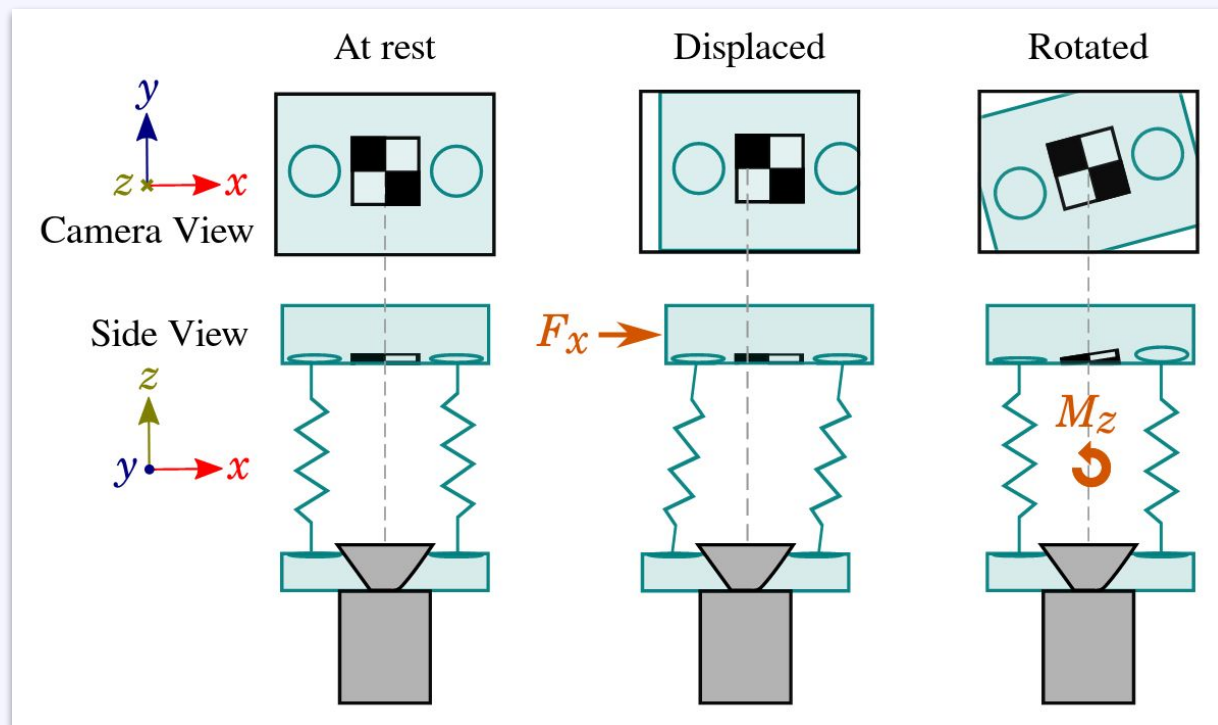


Estimate 6D Pose

# Low-Cost Fiducial-Based 6-Axis Force-Torque Sensor



# Low-Cost Fiducial-Based 6-Axis Force-Torque Sensor

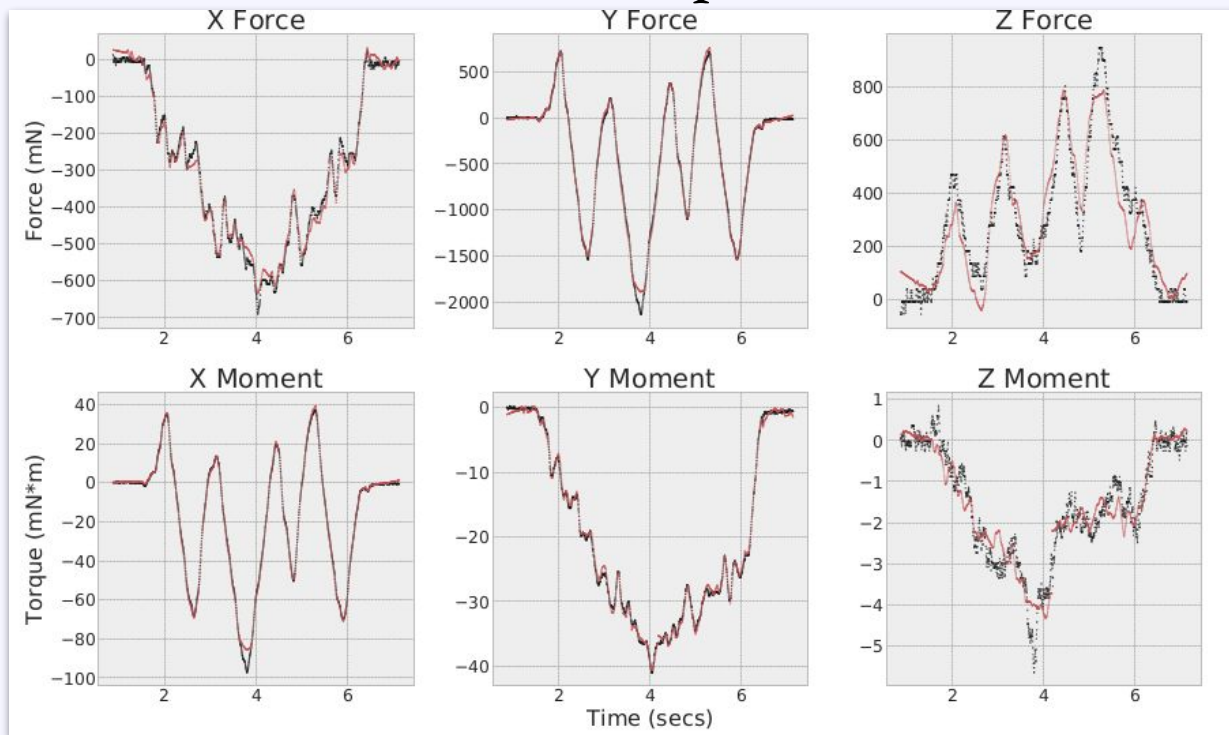


$$\begin{bmatrix} F_x \\ F_y \\ F_z \\ M_x \\ M_y \\ M_z \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} K_{6 \times 6} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} D_x \\ D_y \\ D_z \\ D_\theta \\ D_\phi \\ D_\gamma \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} B \end{bmatrix}$$

# Low-Cost Fiducial-Based 6-Axis Force-Torque Sensor

Black = Ground truth

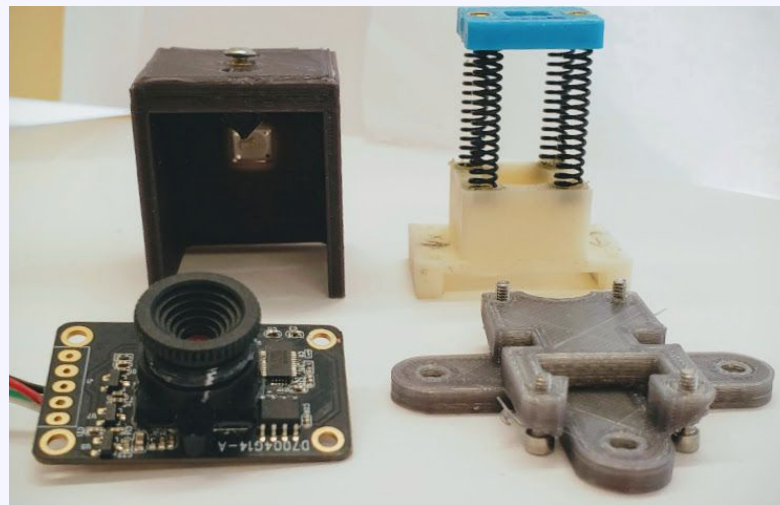
Red = Fiducial sensor



# 100x Cheaper: \$35 vs. \$3,500

TABLE II: List of components and approximate costs.

| Part                      | Details                                     | Cost |
|---------------------------|---|------|
| Camera                    | Mini Camera module, AmazonSIN: B07CHVYTGD   | \$20 |
| LED and 2 wires           | Golden DRAGON Plus White, 6000K, 124 lumens | \$2  |
| 4 springs                 | Assorted small springs set                  | \$5  |
| 3D printed pieces         | PLA filament                                | \$5  |
| Heat-set Threaded Inserts | Package of 50 from McMaster-Carr (use 2)    | \$1  |
| Misc. Bolts               | Hex socket head                             | \$1  |
| Epoxy                     | 5 minute                                    | \$5  |



# Open-Source Hardware & Software

- Released design files: [sites.google.com/view/fiducialforcesensor](https://sites.google.com/view/fiducialforcesensor)

# Open-Source Hardware & Software

- Released design files: [sites.google.com/view/fiducialforcesensor](https://sites.google.com/view/fiducialforcesensor)
- Dr. Pavan Kaushik - postdoc at Max Planck Institute of Animal Behaviour - Locust Swarming



# My Research Journey & Conclusion

## Part III

### Sections

1. My research journey:  
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# Call-to-Action: Research

- **Question**

To what extent do these forums promote and normalize misogyny and contribute to real-life harm?

- **Motivation**

Atlanta shootings in 2020

- **Sub-questions**

Toxicity metric?

Toxicity spread?

Link to real life?

- **Question**

How can we automatically extract user insights?

- **Motivation**

Shift attention from providers to buyers

Estimate impact of policies

- **Sub-questions**

What information is present?

Disambiguating professions?

Subject of text (first- or third-person)?

Skew of data (vs. general population)?



# Call-to-Action: Public Awareness

- Join the hackathon!

Oct. 21st

[hack4fem.github.io](https://hack4fem.github.io)

- Explore the datasets!

[github.com/nro-bot/imi\\_forums](https://github.com/nro-bot/imi_forums)

- I'll post more details at

[nrobot.dev](https://nrobot.dev)

- Academic/Institutional Support

Year-long Fellowships

(similar to Work of the Future)

More generally --

[sites.google.com/view/nlp4positiveimpact](https://sites.google.com/view/nlp4positiveimpact)

# Summary

- The Google Places dataset: illegal activity in plain sight
- The Forum dataset: two case studies and a hackathon
- My research journey:  
| Scotiabank | Digger Finger | Fiducial Force Sensor |]

# Future

- nrobot.dev / nouyang@alum.mit.edu
- Jobs: Industry, research - doesn't have to be AI4SG  
(Effective altruism)

Research is  
collaborative!

Open datasets, open  
source hardware, open  
source software, tools  
for collaboration



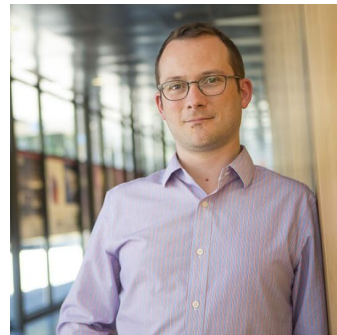
# Acknowledgments

My committee!

Professor Roberto Rigobon

Professor Finale Doshi-Velez

Professor David Parkes



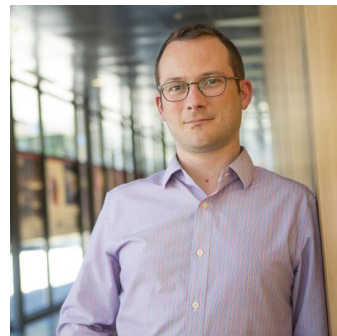
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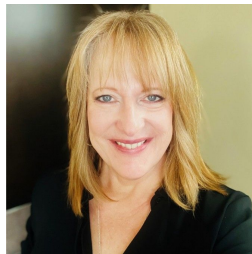


Collaborators

John McGrath, IBM

Julie Braun, WI DoJ

Carlos Garcia, The Network



# Loyal Friends!

## Friends

Marcela Rodriguez, Irina Tolkova

Judy Baek

## Roommates

Erons Ohienmhen, Ondřej Bíža

Arianna McQuillen, Gagan Khandate

## Partner

Diony Rosa

Friends -- Ilia Lebedev, Sarah Cheng, Lily

Zdansky, Cathy Wu, Anvita Pandit



# Support Systems

Psychiatrist - Blake Ritter

Dane Kouttron

Julian Merrick

Amber Houghstow

John Aleman

Nick Kirkby

Daniel Gonzalez

Albert Wang

Joao L. A. S. Ramos, Michael

Laura Shumaker, Robin Deits, Amy Qian, Ethan

Rahn, Annie Labine, Ava Chen, Ben Katz, Juliann Ma



# Letter Writers

Alexander Wait Zaranek (Curoverse)

Sangbae Kim (Biomimetics)

James Bales (Strobe Lab)

Lucas Janson (Statistics)

Daniel Frey (2.007)

Sanjay Sarma (EdX)

Isaac Chuang (NarwhalEdu)

Ken VanArsdel (Fitbit)



# Final Push

- Anna Kreuder
- Erons Ohienmhen
- John Aleman
- Eric Marion
- Ben Hayes
- Mark Goldstein
- Eric Lu
- Cheryl C & Tammi Chen



# More people!

Admins -- Huge thanks to Dr. John Girash!

UROPs

Santi Cantu

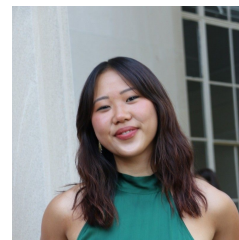
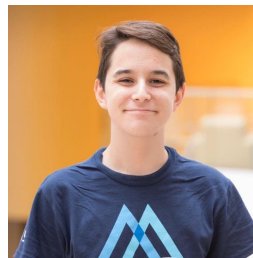
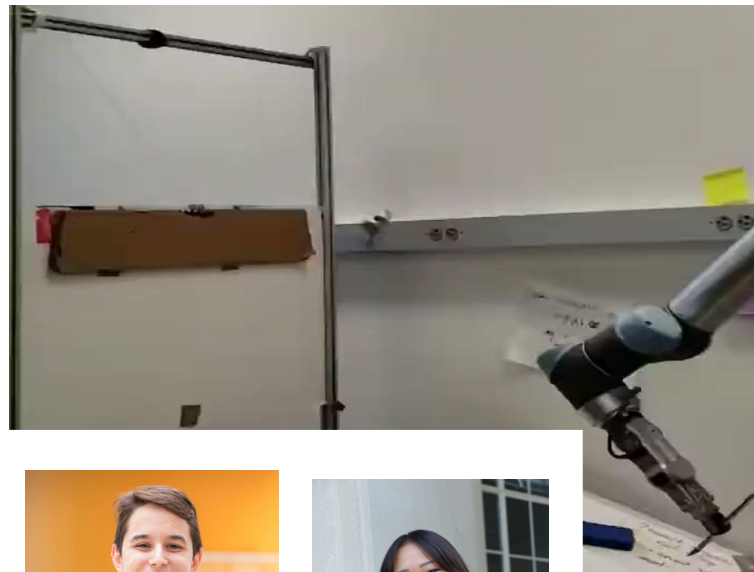
Erin Zhang

Interns

Julian Phillips Kennedy

Danny O'Connor

Janitorial & Security Staff



# Labs I went through

**Howe Lab** - Prof. Robert Howe

Buse Aktas, Alperen, Yash, Qian

Ted Sirota, James Weaver

**Biomimetics Lab** - Albert, Joao

**Helping Hands Lab** - Robert Platt

**Adelson Lab** - Radhen Patel, Branden

Romero, Shaoxiong Wang, Sandra Liu,

Felipe Veiga, Edward Adelson, Greg Izatt

**MD309** - Anitha Gollamundi, Aaron B.

**MD209** - Jialiang, Dor, Mia, Kat

**MD121** - David, Eric, Mark, Crystal,

Mark York

Prof. Suzanne Smith

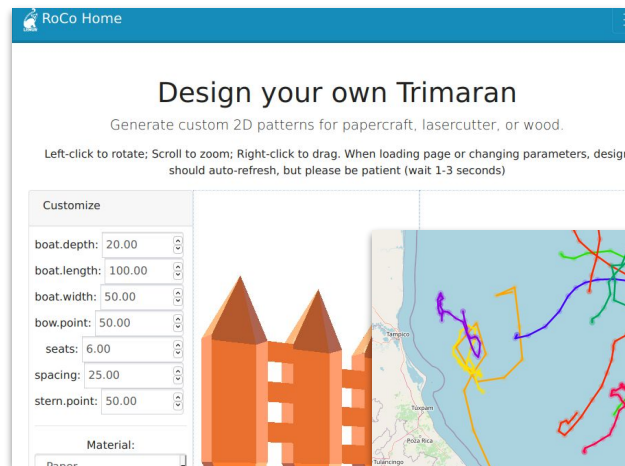
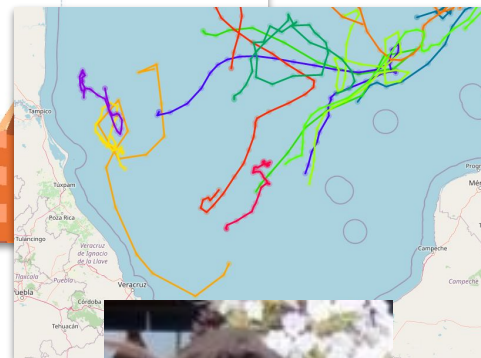


# More people!

Carrie Chai, Ming, and Elsa Riachi @ Scotiabank

Ankur Mehta

Zoz Brooks





# My Parents !



# The End

Thank you!



# Extra Slides

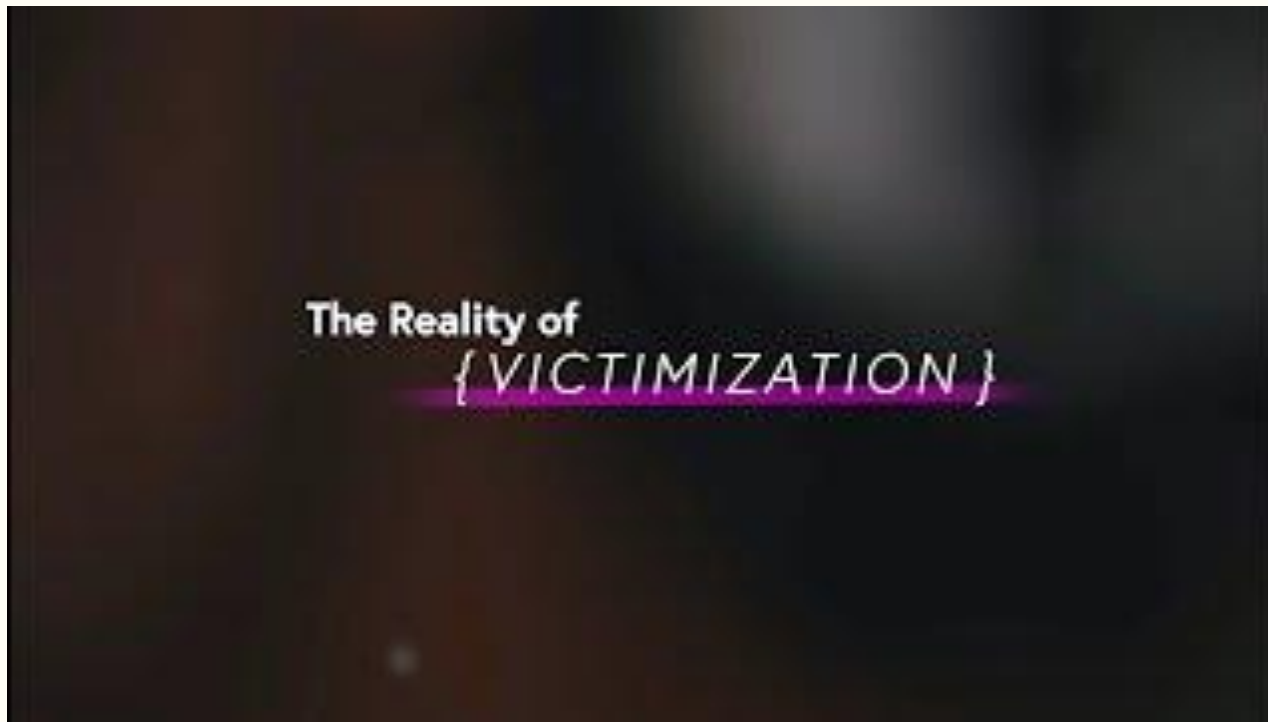
# Ethics

- (Almost) all sex work is illegal in US
- Limited by resources to only egregious cases of trafficking
  - However the "quick win" can be to just shut a place down
- Points of View
  - Consult Hacking\\Hustling [hackinghustling.org](http://hackinghustling.org)

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>What are the effects on women who work in illicit massage parlors?</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some argue that illicit massage parlor work is oppressive and the women workers are typically survivors of human trafficking and are vulnerable to exploitation and violence</li> <li>• Others argue that illicit massage parlor work is similar to other types of work, leading to financial independence and flexible work situations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women often chose illicit massage parlor work from a very small number of employment options; some women described being coerced or deceived into this work, but <b>most women said that they chose this work as their best alternative among limited options</b></li> <li>• On the positive side, the pay was higher than in other industries and could provide opportunities for self-employment</li> <li>• On the negative side, there were risks to physical health (HIV, STIs) and mental health (isolation, stigma); risk of violence from clients and owners, and robbery in this cash-based industry; and possible arrest, fines, and jail, as well as deportation in the case of undocumented immigrants</li> </ul> |
| <b>How do law enforcement and the criminal justice system affect the industry?</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much research has focused on sex trafficking, street prostitution, and the causes of criminal behavior (e.g., linkages among low income levels, drug use, and prostitution; the role of mental health issues and history of abuse)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fear of arrest almost always superseded fear of robbery or assault; many women were reluctant to seek police protection</b></li> <li>• <b>Women who did not read or speak English were often unaware of what was happening after their arrests, leaving them vulnerable to predatory lawyers (or those posing as lawyers), both in their criminal proceedings as well as their immigration cases</b></li> </ul>   |



# The Network Video (Subject Matter Experts)



# The Network Video (Personal Story)



# Ethics

## Butterfly

Happy to discuss more :)

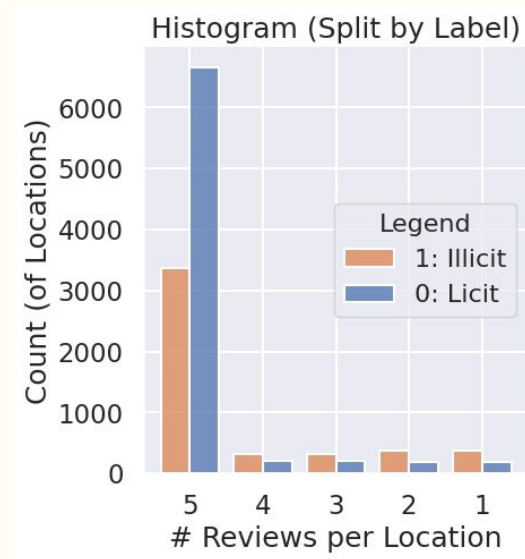
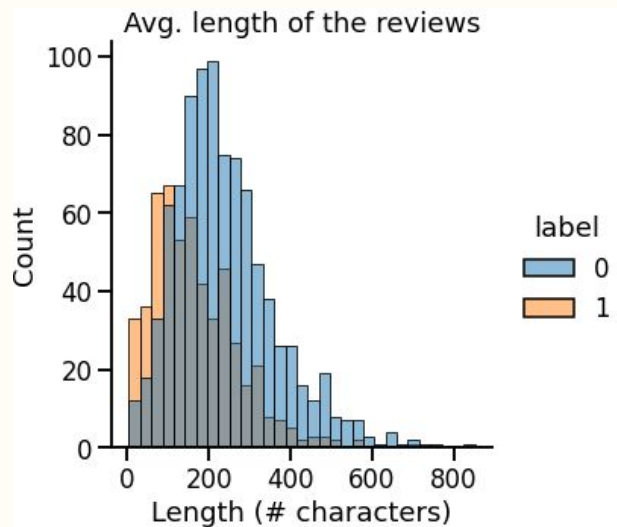
- <https://www.butterflysw.org/publication>
- Chin & Takahashi; <https://aaari.info/20-12-11chin>

## The Network Team

- <https://www.thenetworkteam.org/research>
- <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/04/30/Polaris%20HT%20IMB%20Report.pdf>

“Most victims of illicit massage businesses are women from the mid-thirties to late fifties from China and South Korea”





# Meta Thoughts ala Traffik Analysis Hub

How to engage computer science community?

- Datasets (incl. labor trafficking)
- Competitions ([Hotels50k](#) kaggle)
- Funding, manpower, institutional support
  - internships, capstones, fellowships, postdoc positions
- Concrete use cases

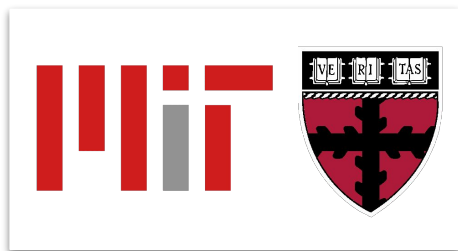
The screenshot shows the competition page for "Hotel-ID to Combat Human Trafficking 2022 - FGVC9". The header includes the competition title, a brief description "Recognizing hotels to aid Human trafficking investigations", and the FGVC9 logo. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for Overview, Data, Code, Discussion, Leaderboard, and Rules, along with a "Join Competition" button. The main content area is titled "Overview" and contains a "Description" section. The description states: "Victims of human trafficking are often photographed in hotel rooms as in the below examples. Identifying these hotels is vital to these trafficking investigations but poses particular challenges due to low quality of images and uncommon camera angles." Below the text are three small example images of hotel rooms. At the bottom of the page, a statistics box displays the following data:

| Teams | Competitors | Entries |
|-------|-------------|---------|
| 75    | 125         | 1,111   |

This competition is part of the Fine-Grained Visual Categorization FGVC9 workshop at the Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition Conference CVPR 2022. A panel will review the top submissions for

# PhD Thesis Defense

## 👋 Machine Learning for Tangible Effects: Natural Language Processing for Uncovering the Illicit Massage Industry



Rui Ouyang

[nrobot@mit.edu](mailto:nrobot@mit.edu) | [nrobot.dev](https://nrobot.dev)

Sept. 5, 2023



Thesis

[arxiv.org/abs/2309.0347](https://arxiv.org/abs/2309.03470)

# Future



# If you know folks working in industry in the AI/NLP or robotics spaces in industry, I'm looking for a job!

- It's a bit old but [I have a resume, linked here](#)
- Preferably: A nice, 500+ person company
  - I prefer a 40 hr work-week
- Prefer: in Boston (in-person at least part of the time)
  - Would consider other places (especially if remote)
- Prefer: hard floor at 175 k
  - Would consider factors like vacation / mission / opportunities to advance / supportive hiring manager etc.

Also if you want to co-work on job applications, let me know :)

[ Edited 15 Sep 2023 ]

