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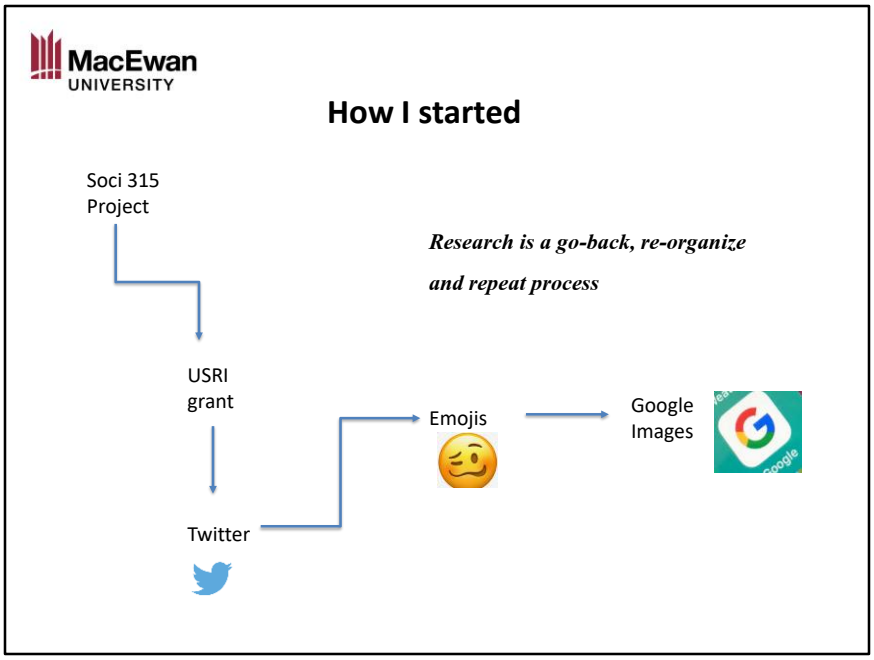
Google Images and the Youth Climate Strike 2019

Student Research Day

Joslin Jefferson



My project began in my sociology research methods class (Soci 315). It originally started as a content analysis of a few twitter posts made about the youth climate strike, but upon hearing about the USRI from Dr. Boulianne, I realized I wanted to further pursue this topic, which lead me to switch gears and look at emojis, but there were not a lot of tweets made with emojis so I switched gears yet again and began looking at Google images related to the Youth Climate Strike. I think one of my biggest takeaways from this project is that research is a go-back, re-organize and repeat process.

My research question was about looking for themes/patterns in the ways that individual protesters expressed themselves, the demographics of the people protesting and what these protesters had to say.

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How I organized and conducted my content analysis

The Stages of the Research Project	May				June				July				Aug.				
	06-10	13-17	20-24	27-31	03-07	10-14	17-21	24-28	01-05	08-12	15-19	22-26	29-02	05-09	12-16	19-23	26-30
Literature Review (10 Hours)																	
Creation of Coding Scheme (10 hours)																	
Coding Tweets (100 hours)																	
Data Analysis (20 Hours)																	
Prepare Poster for Presentation (10 Hours)																	
Report Writing (20 Hours)																	

To begin I made a timeline, this helped me stay organized. The timeline was nice because it gave me a tangible idea of where I should be at during the process of my research.

As you can see, I made time for my project. I had collected my data prior to applying for the USRI, so this timeline does not include that. But I started with a literature review (which gave me more information about how my coding scheme should look and things that were relevant to the youth climate strike), next I focused on making my coding scheme. Then I coded the google images, I had 20 columns in my excel file, so 20 categories of variables I was looking at.

What was interesting to me about the coding process is that once I started coding, I realized there are more variables I wanted to code, and I also realized that one of the variables I was coding was not as relevant as I originally thought. For example in my research I coded gender, which I realized after was an unfair thing to code, because I was assuming gender based off of an image which isn't an accurate way to determine that variable, so that was a variable in which after I completed the coding, I dropped.

As you can see I have a timeline for preparing a poster and writing a report, but I

haven’t gotten this far yet because I have actually further extended my project thanks to Dr. Boulianne, her associate, and the 2020 USRI grant so that I can look at more variables, including slogan intention and how COVID 19 has altered the ways of street protests/demonstrations and how it has moved to an online movement. This, in addition to reading more literature will allow me to write a more comprehensive report.

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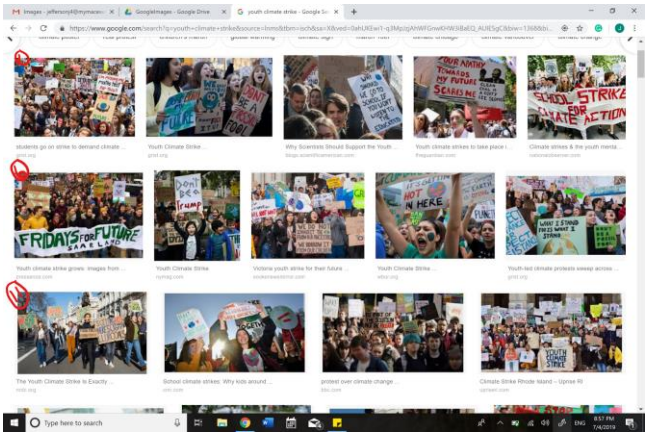
Collecting Data



While my timeline says Twitter, I had switched to Google Images before actually starting the project. Unfortunately, collecting
the google images was actually a lot more time consuming then the methods I had used to collect Tweets. This is because there was not a software, I could use to download all the images. So to collect the Google Images, I had to take screenshots of the google page, which usually gave me about 15 images per screen shot. Then when I went to code them, if they were not good enough quality i would use google to search the image title. While this was time consuming there were some benefits for choosing to collect the data this way. First, taking screen shots allowed me to view the website from which the images were coming from. This allowed me to search the website, if it was unclear what type of source it was (as this was one of my varaibles). Additionally, it assured that I had all images when conducting my analysis and finally, it was free. Which, as a student was very important to me!

So as you can see I just started by numbering the row and then each individual image within the screen shot was given a number 1-752.

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Literature Review

- How the literature review guided my research question:
  - Insights on how to code the data
  - Pitfalls to avoid
  - How to maintain objectivity when analyzing images
  - General information about protests

Once I had collected the data, I conducted a literature review. The literature review gave me valuable insights into how I should code the data, pitfalls to avoid, how to maintain objectivity when looking at images and general information about protests that helped me to guide my research question. I read about 35ish articles for my project, yet I could have read more. I realized after conducting my literature review that there was a lot I wanted to know about the protesters who were participating in the youth climate strike.

I wanted to know what kinds of sources were posting these images of the protesters, the ways the protesters were presenting their voices, what the protesters were saying, the evocation of what was being said, I wanted to know if these protesters suggested solutions, if there were references to things beyond the Youth Climate Strike, what kinds of images were being presented, and what kinds of characters were presenting them.

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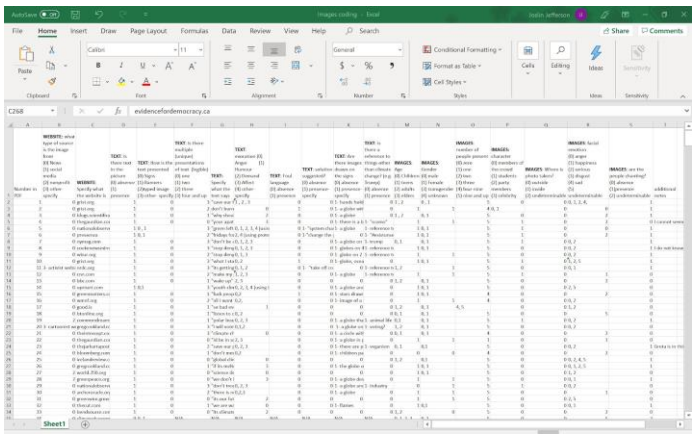
Coding the data



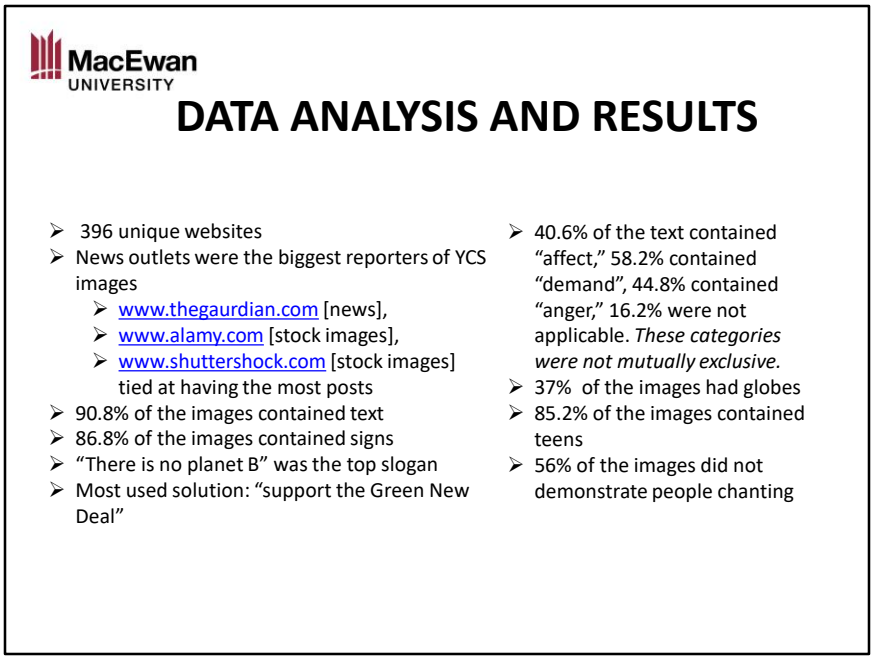
So my coding scheme has many columns because I wanted to know a lot about these images. So I'll quickly break down my coding scheme for you.

So my first column is for the number that the image corresponds to in the PDF.
My second column asks what the source of the image is, which could be coded as news, social media, non-profit or other (and if it was other you had to specify)
My third column asked specifically what the website was, this allowed me to see which outlets were posting the most images about the Youth Climate Strike.
My fourth column was simply asking if there was text presented within the image, and the next column asked how this text was presented (this column was not mutually exclusive as there could be multiple presentations of text in a variety of forms) so for this column I coded that the text could be presented as a sign, a banner, a typed image or other in which I had to specify, so an example of a text presented in another way was that some protesters wore medical masks and wrote "our future" on them.
Next I coded how many unique presentations of text their were, and then I asked specifically what the text in the image said. This was dependent on the quality of the photo. I did this because I wanted to find the main slogans that were being presented during the Strike.

The eighth column I coded was for the evocation of the text presented in the image. This could be coded as anger, humour, demand, affect or other. This category was not mutually exclusive as there could be multiple presentations of text in one image all with different evocations. This one was difficult because it relies on subjective interpretation of the text presented, this was on of the reasons inter-coder reliability is important. By getting another sociology student to check my work I was able to see if my interpretations were relatively objective.
Next I coded for foul language, however I realized after that this column may not have been that important. Then I coded for whether there were solutions suggested, and recorded specifically what they were.
My 12th column coded whether there were references to other things beyond the youth climate strike (so for example if people were bashing trump).
My next four columns were coding visible demographics of the characters within the photo. So the age, gender, number of people present and what type of character i thought they were (so character could be coded as members of the crowd, students, political party members or celebrities (such as Greta).
Additionally, I coded where the image was taken (inside or outside?) Facial emotions and whether people were chanting.

I also made an additional column for any notes that I thought might be important for my data analysis, like for example one image had a lot about “scomo” and I could not find anything on the internet relating to that, so I made note of it.

Every variable I used had an operational definition. For example, when coding evocation, one of my cub codings was “anger” which was defined as any words/phrases that have an underlying tone of annoyance, hostility, or resentment



So to analyze my data, I basically used the functions of excel to get the statistics of my coding scheme, which I did by hand by copying and pasting each column, then alphabetizing them and counting it all out. However, since I have now taken two statistics courses and learned how to use SPSS, the analysis for my 2020 Youth Climate Strike images should be smooth sailing, not to mention so much faster!

Here are some of my most significant results:
-There were 396 unique websites
-News outlets were the biggest reporters of YCS images
-www.thegaurdian.com [news], www.alamy.com [stock images], www.shuttershock.com [stock images] tied at having the most posts about the YCS
-90.8% of the images contained text
-86.8% of the images contained signs, 13.2% of the images contained banners, 2.9% of the images were typed. *These categories were not mutually exclusive*.
-"There is no planet B" was the top slogan
-Most used solution: "support the Green New Deal"
-40.6% of the text contained "affect," 58.2% contained "demand", 44.8% contained "anger," 16.2% were not applicable. *These categories were not mutually exclusive.*
-37% of the images had globes

-85.2% of the images contained teens
5-6% of the images did not demonstrate people chanting

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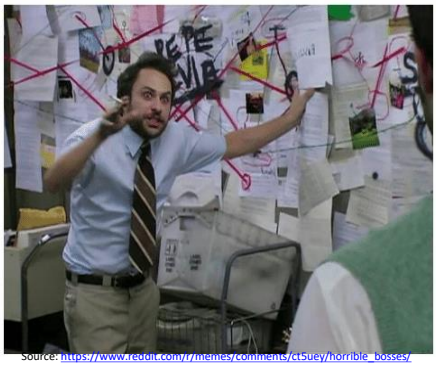
WHERE I AM AT NOW

Me re-organizing after new ideas arise



Source: https://www.reddit.com/r/memes/comments/ct5uey/horrible_bosses/

So as i mentioned earlier, this project is still in the works and thanks to the USRI grant for 2020, Dr. Boulianne and her associate I have new questions I want to explore, such as whether the slogans were an attacking or blaming the government, or if the images differed in anyway amongst publication sources. Additionally, I want to collect more Google Images to see how COVID 19 has turned this strike into an online strike. I also want to conduct further literature review to have a better grasp on analyzing images. So as I said before research is a go-back, reorganize and repeat process and that is where I am at.