Politics, Politics, Politics...

…are prime in terms of the confluence of social media and misinformation

• Lots of attention on elections and BEND type activities
• Large amount of research focused on voters as targets or participants
• We want to look at politicians as important nodes:
  • their networks
  • as targets
  • what messages they pass on/what messages are they a part of
Data Collection: Three Streams

1. Mentions - 1,094 politicians user name seeds
   a. Direct retweets of politicians
   b. Mentions of politicians
   c. Retweets of mentions
      - for time period (Aug 28 – Nov 9, 2018)
      - around 60 million tweets, 3 million users

2. Friends/Followers of the politicians
   - 23 million users

3. Politician Timelines
   Will take a look at using ORA to visually inspect these networks

Mentions over time
Reciprocal Mention Networks

Reciprocal Mention network:
- link exists between two users if they have mentioned (retweeted or other) each other at some point in dataset
- shows two-way conversation between two users

Reciprocal Mention Network Example 1

Colored by Verified Data (red)
Politician

Node Appearance: Node Color: Color by Dense Subgraph (non-orange have > .75 density)

Politician’s account interaction is mostly with other verified accounts. Much of the conversation references politician but doesn’t involve them.

Possible botnet or very active group of humans
Reciprocal Mention Network Example 1

Again, Politician’s account interaction is mostly with other verified accounts. Much of the conversation references politician but doesn’t involve them.

Politician Reciprocal Follower Network

Reciprocal Follower network:
• link exists between two users if both follow each other
• shows stronger connection between two users (similar to Facebook friends)

Data is still very large so we are going to take a look at core parts of the network:
• 72-core: all users are connected to at least 72 other users
• 12-core: all users are connected to at least 12 other users
Reciprocal Follower: 72-core

Colored by political party attribute:
• Red = Republicans
• Blue = Democrats
• Grey = non-politicians (in this case mostly committees/agencies/think tanks)

Reciprocal Follower: 12-core

• Politicians and others in network
• Node Appearance: Node Color: Color by Louvain Grouping
• Four main "quadrants", with 5th smaller group
• Why four groups?
  • Can we use a quick visual analysis to tell?
• Node Appearance: Node Color: Color by Attribute or Measure

• Choosing political party attribute:
  • Red is Republican
  • Blue is Democrat
  • Green is 3rd party

• Divides “top” and “bottom” of network

Reciprocal Follower: 12-core

• Node Appearance: Node Color: Color by Attribute or Measure

• Choosing incumbency attribute (whether they already are in that position or not):
  • Yellow is Incumbent
  • Purple is Challenger

• Divides “left” and “right” of network
Reciprocal Follower: All Politicians Only

- Node Appearance: Node Color: Color by Attribute or Measure
- Choosing political party attribute:
  - Red is Republican
  - Blue is Democrat
  - Green is 3rd party
- The incumbents of both parties are more connected to each other than the challengers
- The challenger Democrats are more numerous and more connected than their Republican counterparts.