Times Tags: Tagging at The New York Times (1851-Today)

Jennifer Parrucci
Senior Taxonomist
The New York Times

The Taxonomy Team

Kristi Reilly, *Taxonomy Manager*

Kristi has been working with Times Tags for 15 years. She started at the Times as an Information Architect and became fascinated with how a 150-year-old vocabulary has evolved
and helped connect readers with the stories that matter most to them. Prior to NYT, she worked for consulting companies owned by Ogilvy and Deloitte.

Jennifer Parrucci, *Senior Taxonomist*

Jennifer has been working with Times Tags for over a decade. She began her career at The Times as an indexer for The New York Times Index where she worked writing abstracts and assigning metadata. Prior to her work at The Times she received her M.L.I.S. from Pratt Institute, where she later earned her certification in archives. Jennifer has always been passionate about books, organizing content, surfacing historical treasures and making sure that everyone can find what they need.

Dan McComas, *Taxonomist*

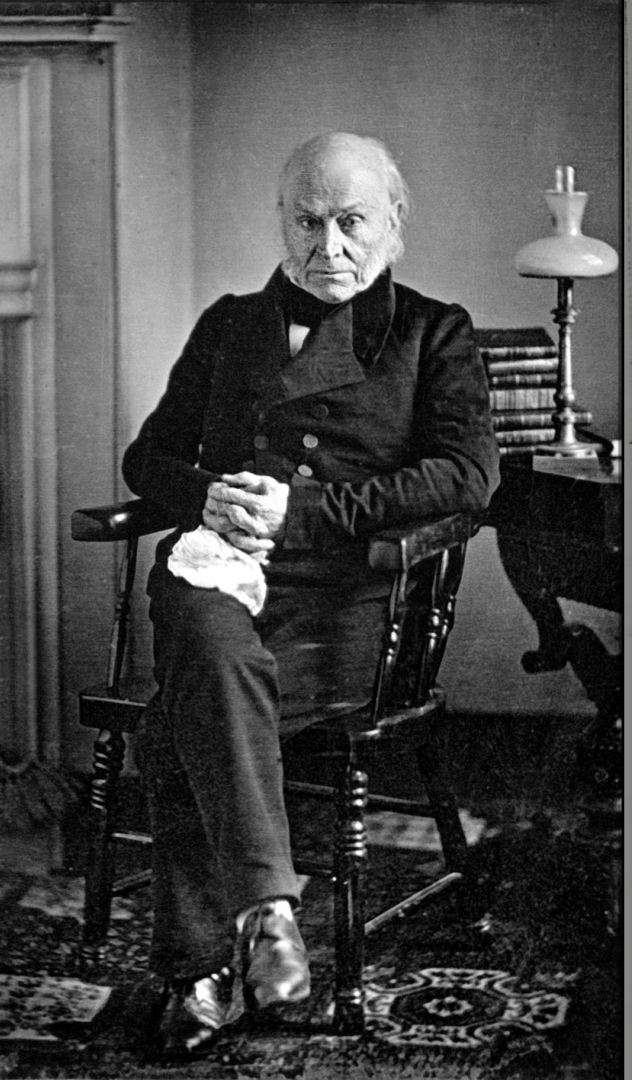
Dan has enjoyed a 20-plus-year career at the NYT in wide-ranging roles across the organization. Before joining the Times Tags team in 2015, Dan was a copy editor in the Times Index department and brings extensive indexing experience to his current role.

First, a little History...

Suppose your editor wanted you to compile a retrospective of John Quincy Adams on the 10th anniversary of his death (February 28, 1858).

You would need some way to identify the relevant material...

Metadata!



INDEX TO THE NEW-YORK TIMES.

From September 1851 to September 1858.

∴ The figures represent the number of the Times.

A

Abd-el-Kader interceded for by Lord Londonderry — 26, 30, 293
Visited by Louis Napoleon — 351
His liberation
Stabs fatally Hamet Ben Cut
In Paris
His interview with Louis Nap
Compared to Toussaint L'Ouvreture (Ed) 368
Invited to England by Lord Londonderry 374
Departs for Turkey 410
History of 829

Abrahams (George) Re-arrested 2006. 2085

A'Beckett (Gilbert) His death 1562

Abel (John) shoots John Everson at Memphis 1804

Abbutucci appointed French minister of justice 124
Aberdeen (earl of) forms a ministry, &10. Personal appea 449

Academy of Medecine (N.Y) report on Public health
ppearance in New York
etch

Advertising, fortunes made by

Adams (John Q.)

Adams (John Q.) on the Fisheries
Letters to Robert Walsh
(Wm J. Q) Her death and burial
views of J.Q.A. on the fishery question
— on the purchase of Cuba
His remains removed
Letter from Ghent
Not opposed to the admission of slave states
His monument & epitaph
The Conspiracy agt. him in 1828
An unpublished letter

Where would this metadata lead you?...

The Morgue

(No, not that kind of morgue)

6 FT. 3 IN.

Complete Sets Available

The New York Times Index

From January, 1913

1913—Covering the Balkan War, China Rebellion, the Mexican Rebellion, and other events in the United States and abroad.

1914-1918—A chronological record of the great World War and momentous happenings in all countries.

1919-1921—League of Nations, tariff and taxation, prohibition, changes in National Administration, reconstruction, Disarmament Conference, aviation.

1922—Irish question, unrest in India, independence of Egypt, ratification of treaties, amateur radio activity, Genoa Conference, Election Campaigns, the latest activities in science, politics and business, besides thousands of subjects and biographies that find their way into the newspaper.

The Index is indispensable for quick reference to dates and facts.

Bound in cloth, $8.00 a year.

Value of New York Times's Index.

(From The Fourth Estate.)

The subject of news indexes

Y. M. C. A. LIBRARIAN VALUES TIMES INDEX

It Will Form Part of the Library of Every Branch Eventually, Miss F. R. Petrie Thinks.

FITTED TO THEIR FIELD

As a Record of Athletics and Debates It Will Fill a Need Long Felt by the Association.

TIMES INDEX A HELP IN BUSINESS WORLD

Field of Commerce Covered in an Admirable Way, Says Mr. Pratt of Chamber Here.

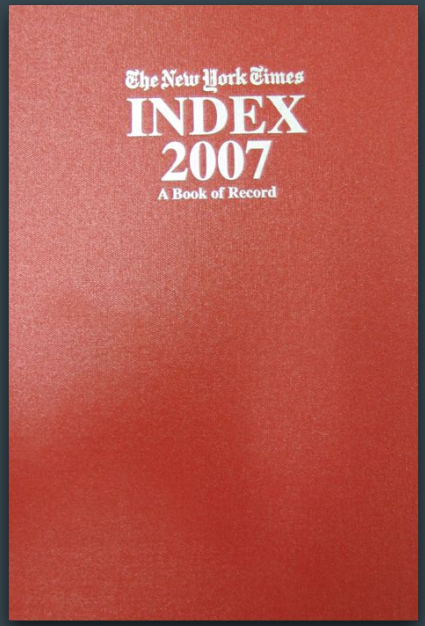
BROAD INFORMATION GIVEN

It Supplements Statistical Data Now Being Gathered by All Large Houses and Interests.

The New York Times Index (1913-2017)

Rigorous quality checks originate from the Index, a role that was treated as an apprenticeship.

“The Paper of Record”



Main Heading---Education and Schools. See also Related Subject Headings

- Athletics and Sports
- Colleges and Universities
- Culture
- Illiteracy
- Mental Retardation
- Scholarships and Fellowships
- Sex Education
- Vocational Training

New York City, once a proud leader in arts education, is now struggling to provide its students with any arts at all; while budget cuts have decimated arts programs in many cities and towns across the country, arts education experts say that New York, magnet for artists, is among the worst off; examples cited; photo (M) F 5, B, 1:3

This article appeared on February 5th; Section B; page 1; column 3

Length of article: L=Long (over 3 columns), M=Medium (1-3 columns), S=Short (Less than 1 column).

The New York Times.

LATE CITY EDITION

OUR ASIATIC FLEET, 1,680 MEN, SENT TO SHANGHAI; BRITISH ALSO ACT; FRANCE AND ITALY BACK POLICY; FIGHTING IS RENEWED IN CITY; BATTLE NEAR HARBIN

The Present

What are Times Tags?

- **A controlled vocabulary based off the original Index terms**
  - Named entities (over a million)
    - People, Places, Organizations, Titles
  - Subjects (~4,500)
    - Semantic Relationships: Broad, Narrow and Related Terms + Scope Notes
    - Includes News Events
- **Assigned to all published assets**
  - Articles, videos, slide shows, interactives, podcast episode pages
- **Rule-based Software**
  - Entity extraction: normalization, disambiguation
  - Categorization: frequency, proximity, placement

Rule-based Entity Extraction

Normalization

Qaddafi, Muammar el-

Muammar El-Gadhafi	Muammar el-Qaddafi	Muammar al-Qaddafi
Muammar el-Gaddafi	Moammar Al-Gaddafi	Moammar El-Gadhafi
Muammar al-Gaddafi	Muammar El-Qaddafi	Moammar al-Qaddafi
Muammar el-Gadhafi	Moammar el-Gaddafi	Moammar Qaddafi
Muammar Gadhafi	Moammar Gaddafi	Muammar Al-Qaddafi
Muammar Qaddafi	Muammar Al-Gaddafi	Muammar Gaddafi
Muammar al-Gadhafi	Moammar el-Qaddafi	Moammar el-Gadhafi
Muammar Al-Gadhafi	Moammar Al-Gadhafi	Moammar Gadhafi
Moammar El-Qaddafi	Moammar El-Gaddafi	Moammar al-Gaddafi
Muammar El-Gaddafi	Moammar Al-Qaddafi	Moammar al-Gadhafi

Rule-based Entity Extraction

Disambiguation

Michael Jackson

> {(OR,"album","albums","Apollo Theater","Billie Jean","Dan Reed","Debbie Rowe","Jackson 5","Jackson Five","Janet Jackson","King of Pop","La Toya","LaToya","moonwalk","Neverland","pop star","pop superstar","Rock and Roll Hall of Fame","Safechuck","This Is It","Wade Robson")}
>
> {(AND,"Bush","Homeland Security",(OR,"deputy director","director"))}

Giants,@COND:"Baseball" ➜ San Francisco Giants

Giants,@COND:"Football" ➜ New York Giants

Rule-based Categorization

(SENT,

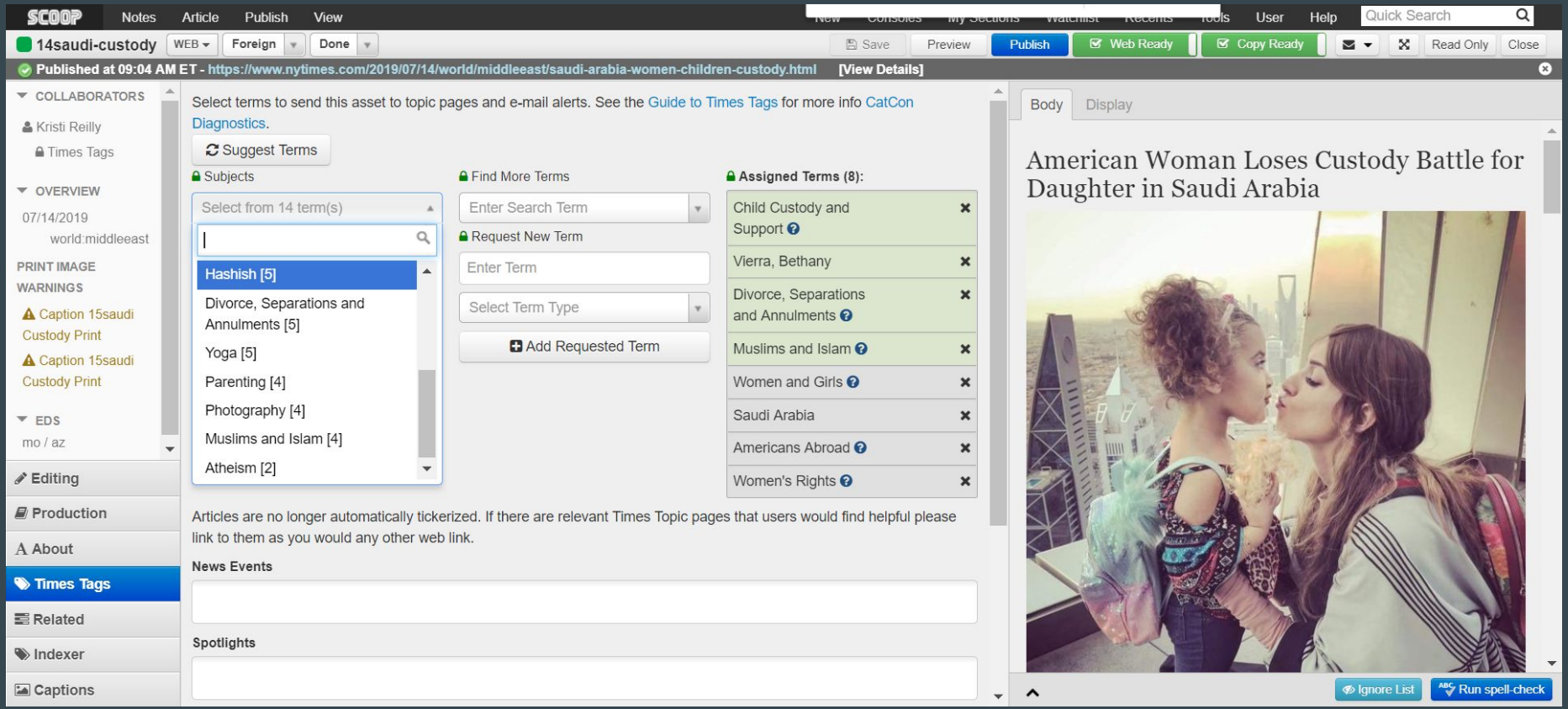
(OR,"air traffic control","airline","airbus","aircraft","aircrafts","airline","airlines","airliner","airplane","airplanes","airship","airships","boeing","dirigible","dirigibles","flight","helicopter","helicopters","hindenburg","jet","jetliner","landing gear","mu-2b","plane","planes","pilot","zeppelin","zeppelins"),

(OR,"blast","blast of laser light","blew up","body parts","bodies","bomb","bomb threat","broke apart","broke into pieces","careered","collided","collision","crash","crashed","crashing","dead","debris","disaster","disasters","destruction","destroy@","distress call","distress calls","engine failure","fell","flash-blindness","hit","injured","killed","laser pointing","laser strike","laser strikes","lost control","lost radar","mangled","mechanical failure","out of control","plummeted","plummeting","point lasers at","pointed a laser at","pointed lasers at","pointing lasers at","safety record","sank","skidded","slammed into","smashed","struck","sunk","survivor","survivors","tipped over","vanish","vanishing","vanished","veered","victim","victims","went down","wreckage","wreck"))

Rule-based Categorization

Byline:	Manhola Dargis	→	Movies
Kicker:	Hungry City	→	Restaurants
Layout_desk:	Obits	→	Deaths (Obituaries)

Times Tags and CMS Scoop (Oak & Classic UI), Blackbeard



Times Tags and CMS Scoop (Oak & Classic UI), Blackbeard

Washington | Done | Save | Preview | Publish | Web Ready | Copy Ready | Read Only | Close

Select terms to send this asset to topic pages and e-mail alerts. See the Guide to Times Tags for more info CatCon Diagnostics.

Suggest Terms

Subjects
Select from 11 term(s)

Organizations
Select from 9 term(s)

People
Select from 3 term(s)

Locations
Select from 8 term(s)

Titles
Select from 1 term(s)

Find More Terms

Used for any coverage dealing with conflicts of interest, the situation in which a person or organization is involved in multiple interests that could lead to misconduct.

Enter Term

Select Term Type

Add Requested Term

Assigned Terms (10):

- nald J
- Interest
- Turnberry (Scotland Golf Resort)
- United States Politics and Government
- United States Air Force
- Hotels and Travel Lodgings

Articles are no longer automatically tickerized. If there are relevant Times Topic pages that users would find helpful please link to them as you would any other web link.

News Events

Body | Display

Trump Had Deal With Scotland Airport That Sent Flight Crews to His Resort

Anna Moneymaker/The New York Times

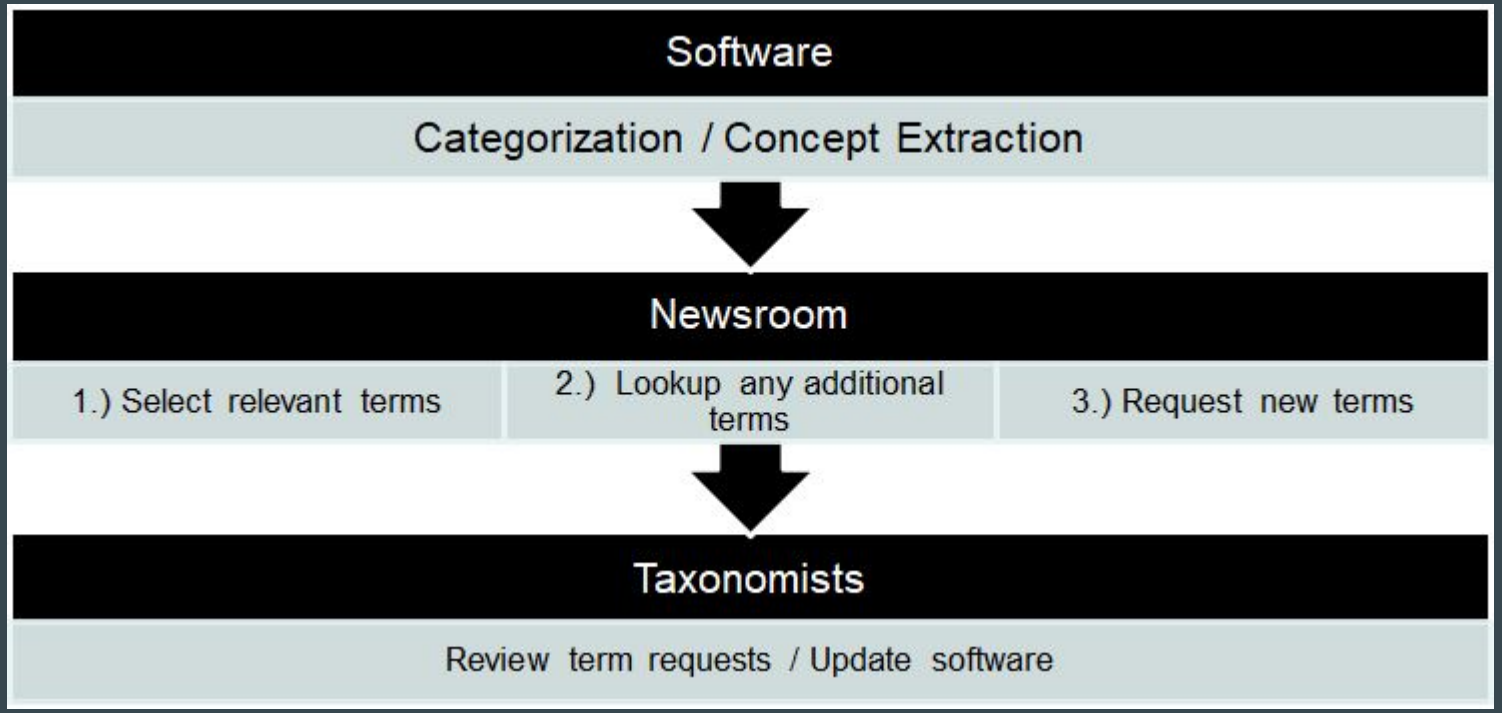
"NOTHING TO DO WITH ME," President Trump tweeted on Monday, in response to reports of service members staying at his hotel in Scotland.

By ERIC LIPTON
WASHINGTON

What's special about them?

- **"Aboutness"/Semantic Meaning**
  - Tag only the focus
    - We don't tag: figurative language, historical references, metonyms, spokespeople/people quoted
  - Strict guidelines, some examples:
    - For a crime, the type of crime, the victims/suspects and location
    - For an election, the type of election, the candidates and location
    - For legislation, the bill authors/sponsors, legislative body
    - For an obit, the deceased and subject of his/her legacy
    - For a restaurant review, the name of the restaurant, the location and the term Restaurants.
    - For a trial, the plaintiff/defendants, and the criminal charges
- **Quality control** measures ensure accuracy
  - Software suggests > Newsroom selects > Taxonomists check
  - Daily report summarizes
  - 7 days a week, 365 days a year

Software Suggests → Humans Verify



Tagging Guides

Times Tags FAQ

By Kristi Reilly. Last edited by Wen Zhang 6 months ago. Edit

Table Of Contents:

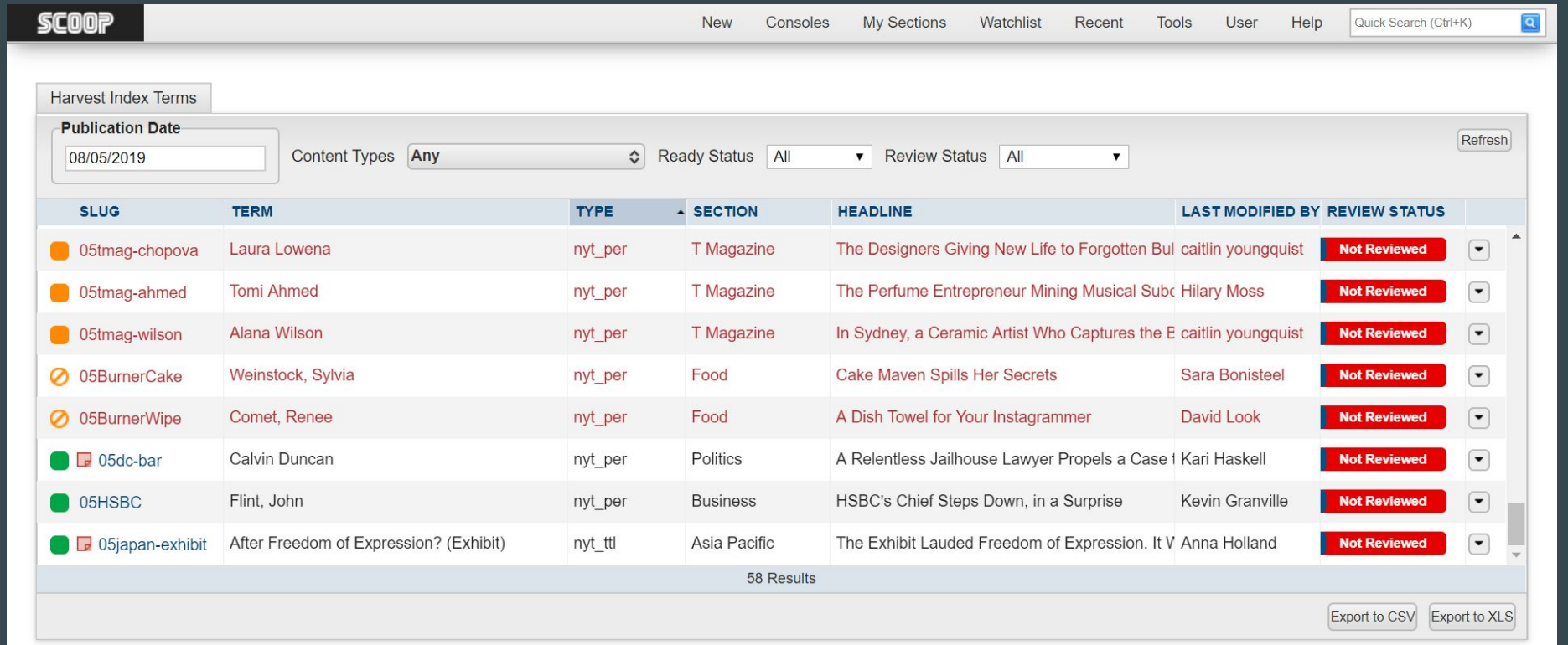
1.) Why tag?
2.) How many terms are there?
3.) How many terms should I choose?
4.) How do I decide which terms are relevant?
5.) Broad or narrow terms?
6.) Does the order matter?
7.) When should I request a new term?
8.) Why are some of the terms so verbose, how can this be good for SEO?
9.) How does the software suggest terms?
10.) Why do I sometimes have to assign two terms for one concept?
11.) What if the suggested term does not appear with special characters, accents, umlauts, etc.?
12.) Should I ever tag a reporter's

1.) Why tag?

Tagging is much more than assigning keywords to an asset. When you tag an asset, you make a decision about where that asset will appear on the site and who will find it. The terms you choose reflect editorial judgment and should be selected carefully. Please review this FAQ before tagging. If you have not had a training session or would like a refresher, please email timestags@nytimes.com

When you tag an asset (blog post, article, slide show, video etc.), you assign that asset to applications across the site that are driven by tags. Tag-driven applications include the recommendation engine, topic/collection pages, e-mail topic alerts, advertising and event-specific site sections like the Olympics, World Cup, NCAA Championships etc. Failing to choose the correct term means the asset will not appear on page results.

Harvest Terms



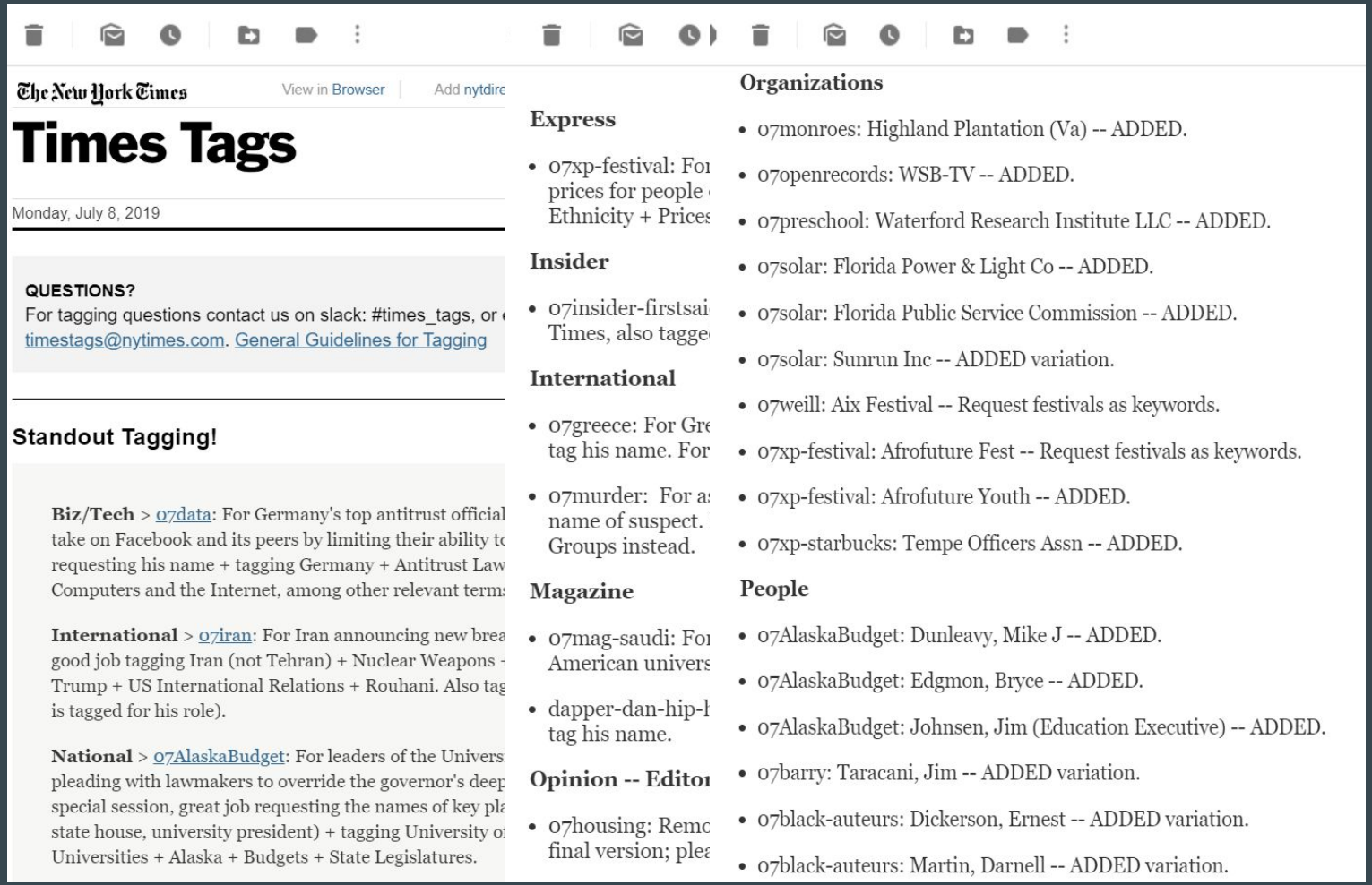
Daily Newsletter

Taxonomists publish a daily report to the newsroom:

Standout Tagging: What was tagged well.

Tips: What was retagged.

Updates: Newly added terms.



The New York Times View in Browser | Add nytdire

Times Tags

Monday, July 8, 2019

QUESTIONS?
For tagging questions contact us on slack: #times_tags, or e
timestags@nytimes.com. General Guidelines for Tagging

Standout Tagging!

Biz/Tech > 07data: For Germany's top antitrust official take on Facebook and its peers by limiting their ability to requesting his name + tagging Germany + Antitrust Law Computers and the Internet, among other relevant terms

International > 07iran: For Iran announcing new brea good job tagging Iran (not Tehran) + Nuclear Weapons + Trump + US International Relations + Rouhani. Also tag is tagged for his role).

National > 07AlaskaBudget: For leaders of the Univers pleading with lawmakers to override the governor's deep special session, great job requesting the names of key pla state house, university president) + tagging University of Universities + Alaska + Budgets + State Legislatures.

Express

- 07xp-festival: For prices for people Ethnicity + Prices

Insider

- 07insider-firstsai Times, also tagge

International

- 07greece: For Gre tag his name. For
- 07murder: For a name of suspect. Groups instead.

Magazine

- 07mag-saudi: For American univers
- dapper-dan-hip-h tag his name.

Opinion -- Editor

- 07housing: Remo final version; plea

Organizations

- 07monroes: Highland Plantation (Va) -- ADDED.
- 07openrecords: WSB-TV -- ADDED.
- 07preschool: Waterford Research Institute LLC -- ADDED.
- 07solar: Florida Power & Light Co -- ADDED.
- 07solar: Florida Public Service Commission -- ADDED.
- 07solar: Sunrun Inc -- ADDED variation.
- 07weill: Aix Festival -- Request festivals as keywords.
- 07xp-festival: Afrofuture Fest -- Request festivals as keywords.
- 07xp-festival: Afrofuture Youth -- ADDED.
- 07xp-starbucks: Tempe Officers Assn -- ADDED.

People

- 07AlaskaBudget: Dunleavy, Mike J -- ADDED.
- 07AlaskaBudget: Edgmon, Bryce -- ADDED.
- 07AlaskaBudget: Johnsen, Jim (Education Executive) -- ADDED.
- 07barry: Taracani, Jim -- ADDED variation.
- 07black-auteurs: Dickerson, Ernest -- ADDED variation.
- 07black-auteurs: Martin, Darnell -- ADDED variation.

How are tags being leveraged today?

Collections/Topics

Climate and Environment

Climate Change Is Complex. We've Got Answers to Your Questions.

We know. Global warming is daunting. So here's a place to start: 17 often-asked questions with some straightforward answers.

September 19, 2017 · By JUSTIN GILLIS

Is Climate-Themed Fiction All Too Real? We Asked the Experts

Some works of apocalyptic fiction are starting to feel too close for comfort. We chose seven of them and asked: How likely are they to come true?

1d ago · By LIVIA ALBECK-RIPKA

Hurricanes, Earthquakes and Wildfires: Is All This Normal?

A climate reporter for The Times explains what you should know about recent disasters that have struck in quick succession.

1d ago · By HENRY FOUNTAIN and DAVID BOTTI

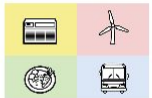
BY DEGREES

The Real Unknown of Climate Change: Our Behavior

Scientific predictions about Earth's sensitivity to greenhouse gases have generally held up. But no one can predict how much more carbon pollution people will choose to pump out.

September 18, 2017 · By JUSTIN GILLIS

From Heat Waves to Hurricanes: What We Know About Extreme Weather and Climate Change



If You Fix This, You Fix a Big Piece of the Climate Puzzle

Alaska's Permafrost Is Thawing

How Americans Think About Climate Change, in Six Maps

Miles of Ice Collapsing Into the Sea

Measles Outbreak

The measles outbreak has grown to more than 700 cases in 22 states, making it the worst in decades, the C.D.C. reported. Here's complete coverage of the outbreak and efforts to stop its spread.

BRITTANY GREESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Parents of Babies Too Young to Vaccinate Feel Trapped by Measles Outbreak

The measles vaccine is not usually given to children until they are a year old. So some new parents are avoiding public places and anti-vaccine friends.

May 2, 2019 · By JULIE BOSMAN

JOHANNES EISELE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Measles Outbreak: N.Y. Eliminates Religious Exemptions for Vaccinations

New York, where measles has spread in ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, joins California and a handful of other states in revoking religious exemptions.

June 13, 2019 · By JESSE McKINLEY

GLOBAL HEALTH

Measles Cases Surpass 700 as Outbreak Continues Unabated

The outbreak is now the worst in decades. Children under age 5 account for about half of the cases.

April 29, 2019 · By DONALD G. McNEIL Jr.

Measles Outbreak Questions and Answers: Everything You Want to Know

The disease was declared eliminated in 2000. So far this year, there have been more than 970 cases.

February 20, 2019 · By PAM BELLUCK and ADEEL HASSAN

GLOBAL HEALTH

Religious Objections to the Measles Vaccine? Get the Shots, Faith Leaders Say

One More Time, With Big Data: Measles Vaccine Doesn't Cause Autism

Measles Outbreak: What Are Religious Exemptions for Vaccinations?

90 New Cases of Measles Reported in U.S. as Outbreak Continues Record Pace

'Monkey, Rat and Pig DNA': How Misinformation Is Driving the Measles Outbreak Among Ultra-Orthodox Jews

Collections/Topics

news_desk:"Climate" OR subject:("Acid Rain" "Air Pollution" "Algae" "Alternative and Renewable Energy" "Animal Migration" "Biodiversity" "Biofuels" "Birdwatching" "Carbon Capture and Sequestration" "Carbon Dioxide" "Coal" "Coast Erosion" "Compost" "Conservation of Resources" "Coral" "Drilling and Boring" "Eco-Tourism" "Electric and Hybrid Vehicles" "Electric Light and Power" "Endangered and Extinct Species" "Energy and Power" "Energy Efficiency" "Environment" "Federal Lands" "Fish and Other Marine Life" "Fuel Efficiency" "Fuel Emissions (Transportation)" "Geothermal Power" "Global Warming" "Green New Deal" "Greenhouse Gas Emissions" "Greenhouse Effect" "Hazardous and Toxic Substances" "Hydroelectric Power" "Hurricanes and Tropical Storms" "Keystone Pipeline" "Land Use Policies" "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)" "Light-Emitting Diodes" "Local Food" "Nuclear Energy" "Oil (Petroleum) and Gasoline" "Plastic Bags" "Pipelines" "Recycling of Waste Materials" "Reefs" "Solar Energy" "Sustainable Living" "Tidal and Wave Power" "United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change" "Water Pollution" "Wetlands" "Wilderness Areas" "Wildfires" "Wildlife Sanctuaries and Nature Reserves" "Wind Power") OR subject.contains:("Hurricane") OR organizations.contains:("Energy Department" "Environmental Protection Agency" "Koch Industries") OR persons:("Perry, Rick" "Pruitt, Scott" "Wheeler, Andrew R")

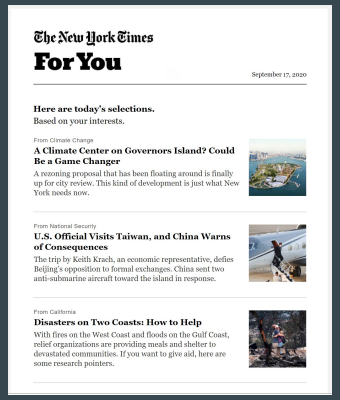
SEO Variants / Vernaculars

- Each term contains a "vernacular" variant for SEO
- Example:
  - Canonical = "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act"
  - Vernacular = "ACA"
  - Vernacular = "Obamacare"

For You

Tags send assets to For You:

- Mobile channels
- Daily email recommendations


The New York Times

For You

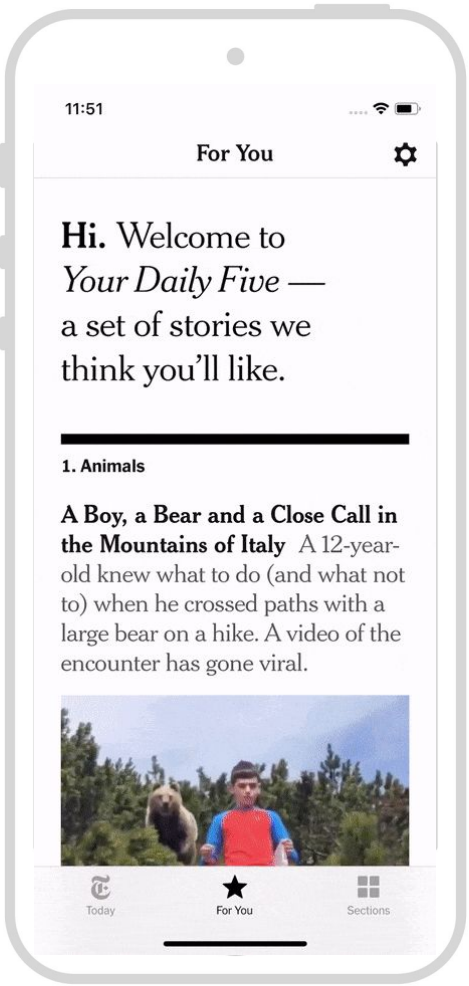
September 17, 2020

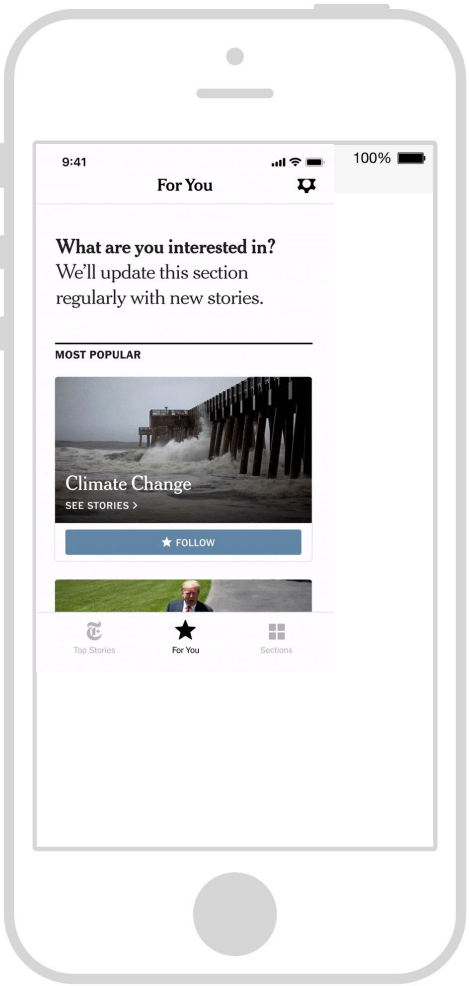
Here are today's selections.
Based on your interests.

From Climate Change
A Climate Center on Governors Island? Could Be a Game Changer
A rezoning proposal that has been floating around is finally up for city review. This kind of development is just what New York needs now.

From National Security
U.S. Official Visits Taiwan, and China Warns of Consequences
The trip by Keith Krach, an economic representative, defies Beijing's opposition to formal exchanges. China sent two anti-submarine aircraft toward the island in response.

From California
Disasters on Two Coasts: How to Help
With fires on the West Coast and floods on the Gulf Coast, relief organizations are providing meals and shelter to devastated communities. If you want to give aid, here are some research pointers.

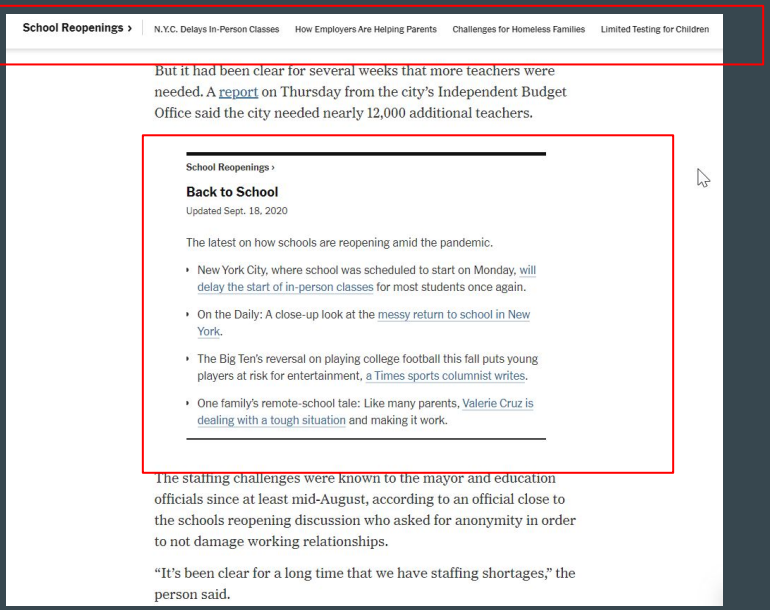




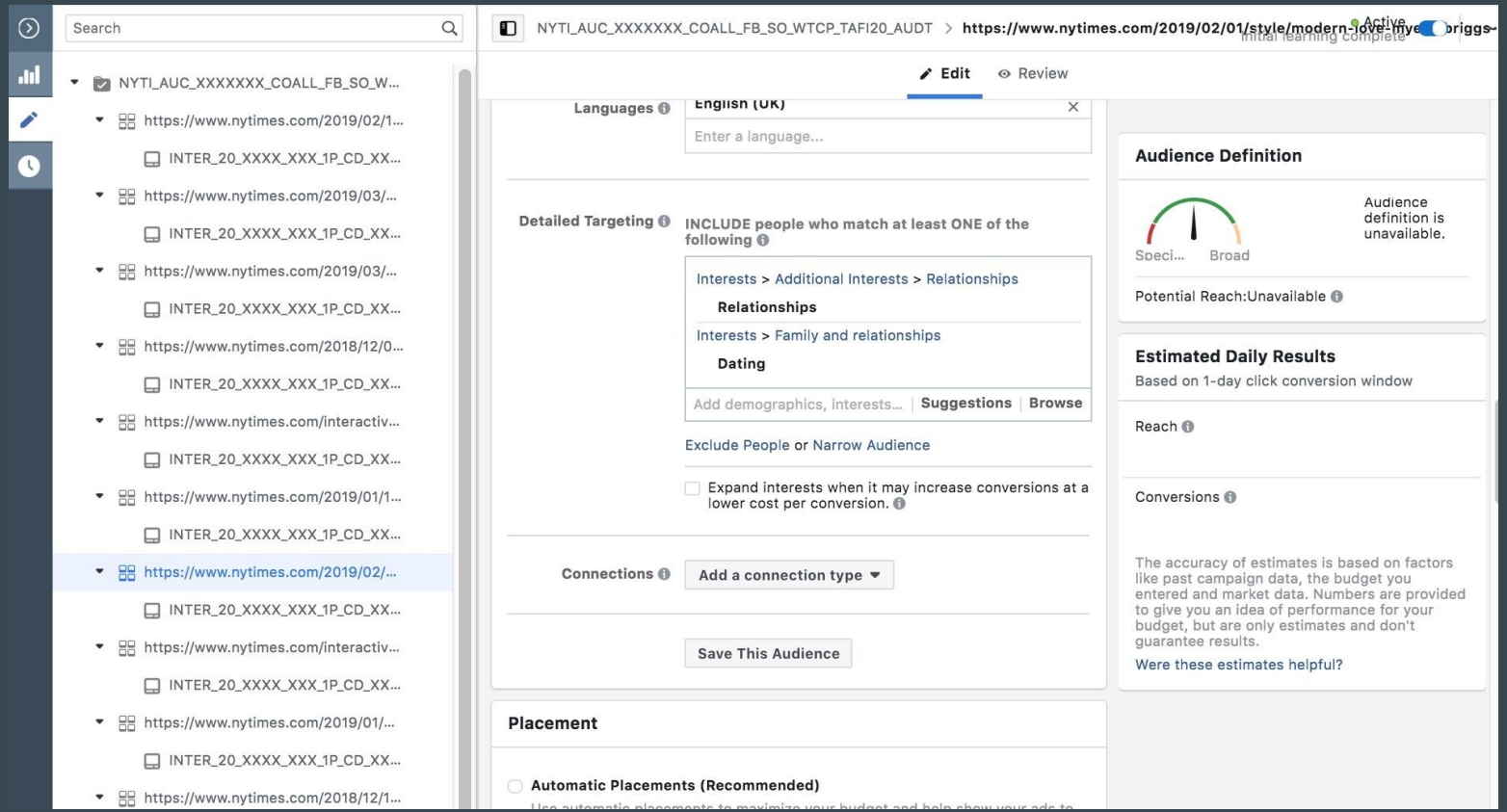
Story

Select terms will trigger Story treatments on the site:

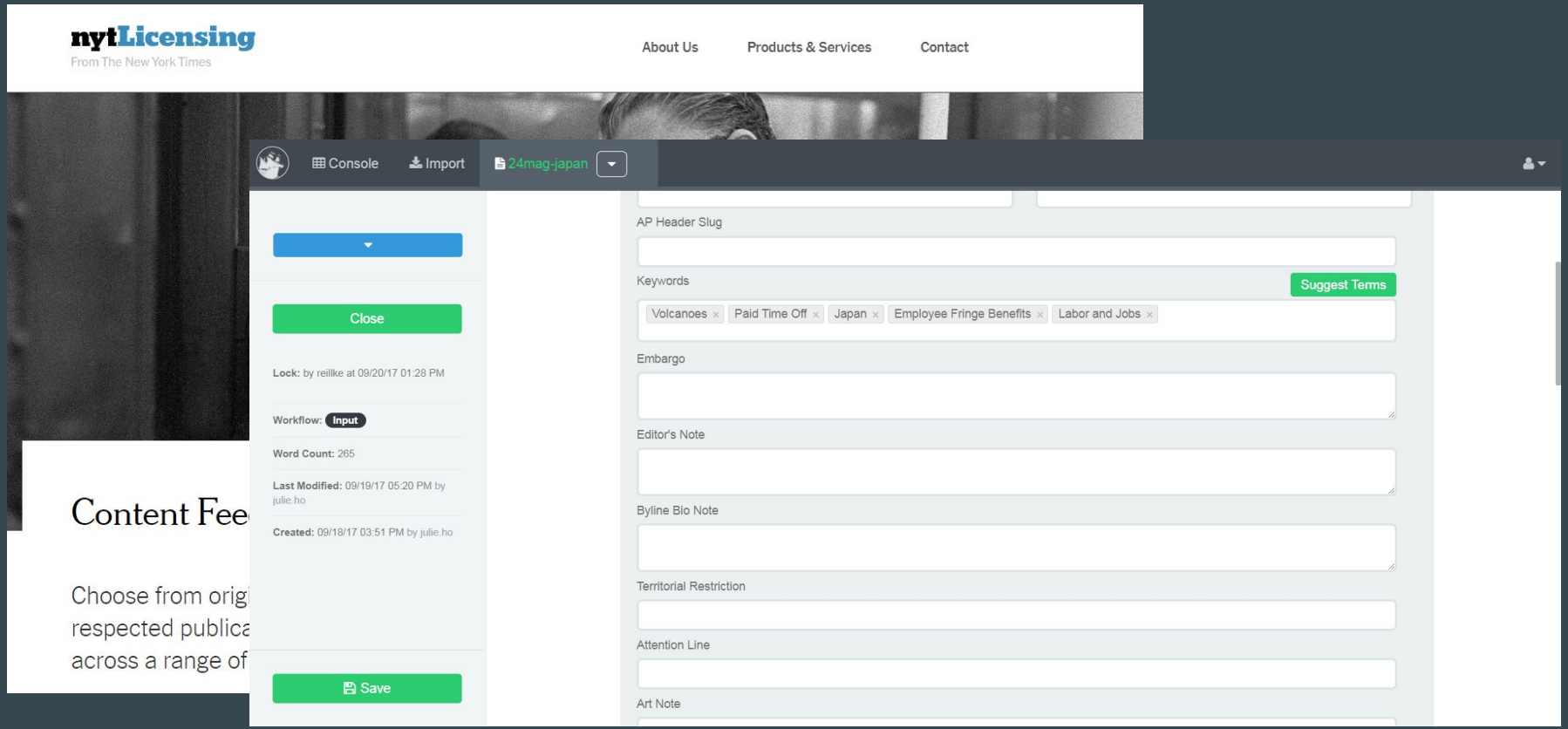
- Sub-nav
- Inline info boxes



TAFI (Twitter and Facebook Interface)



News Services/Syndicate



Advertising

- Contex
- Brand S

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT: UPPER EAST SIDE

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT: UPPER EAST SIDE; Jumbo Bids Flying in War for Park Hot-Dog Stands

By Bruce Lambert

Search

- Site Se posting" on Time
- Collecti result in site search
- Bruce Lambert Hot Dogs

TimesMachine

The New York Times

Buy Reprints from the NYT Store

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1963

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1963

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Vietnam 7

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Racial Integration 14

FILTER

Type to filter Index

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times.

LATE CITY EDITION

VOL. CXII ... No. 38,581. NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1963. TEN CENTS

BILL TO CUT TAXES 11 BILLION VOTED BY HOUSE PANEL

Modified Kennedy Measure Approved, 17 to 8—Faces Floor Action Next Week

G.O.P. PLAN IS DEFEATED

President Appeals for His Proposal Reducing Levies Over Two-Year Period

PUSHES TAX CUT: President Kennedy makes last-minute changes in speech as Henry Ford 2d arrives him to business group.

KENNEDY ORDERS HALT IN DRAFTING OF MARRIED MEN

Status of 360,000 Affected —Inductees to Be Called Up at an Earlier Age

Washington Divided Over Aid to Vietnam

VIETNAM CLOSES 5 MORE SCHOOLS; 100 ARE ARRESTED

2,400 Now Held in Saigon —Regime Presents Two Girls as Red Agents

WALLACE ENDS RESISTANCE AS GUARD IS FEDERALIZED; MORE SCHOOLS INTEGRATE

PARIS DRAWS PLAN TO HALT INFLATION

Proposes Wage and Price Restraint—Lists Costs Up 16% in 3 Years

AID FOR RETARDED IS VOTED BY HOUSE

Program Cut to 238 Million and Sent Back to Senate, Which May Restore Funds

DEMONSTRATOR ARRESTED: Policemen subdue man protesting admission of Negroes to West End High School, Birmingham. Twelve white demonstrators were arrested there.

20 NEGROES ENTER

12 Whites Arrested in

24 West 57th Street

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Archive Discovery

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Kennedy's
Arrives in N
Fri Sep 09

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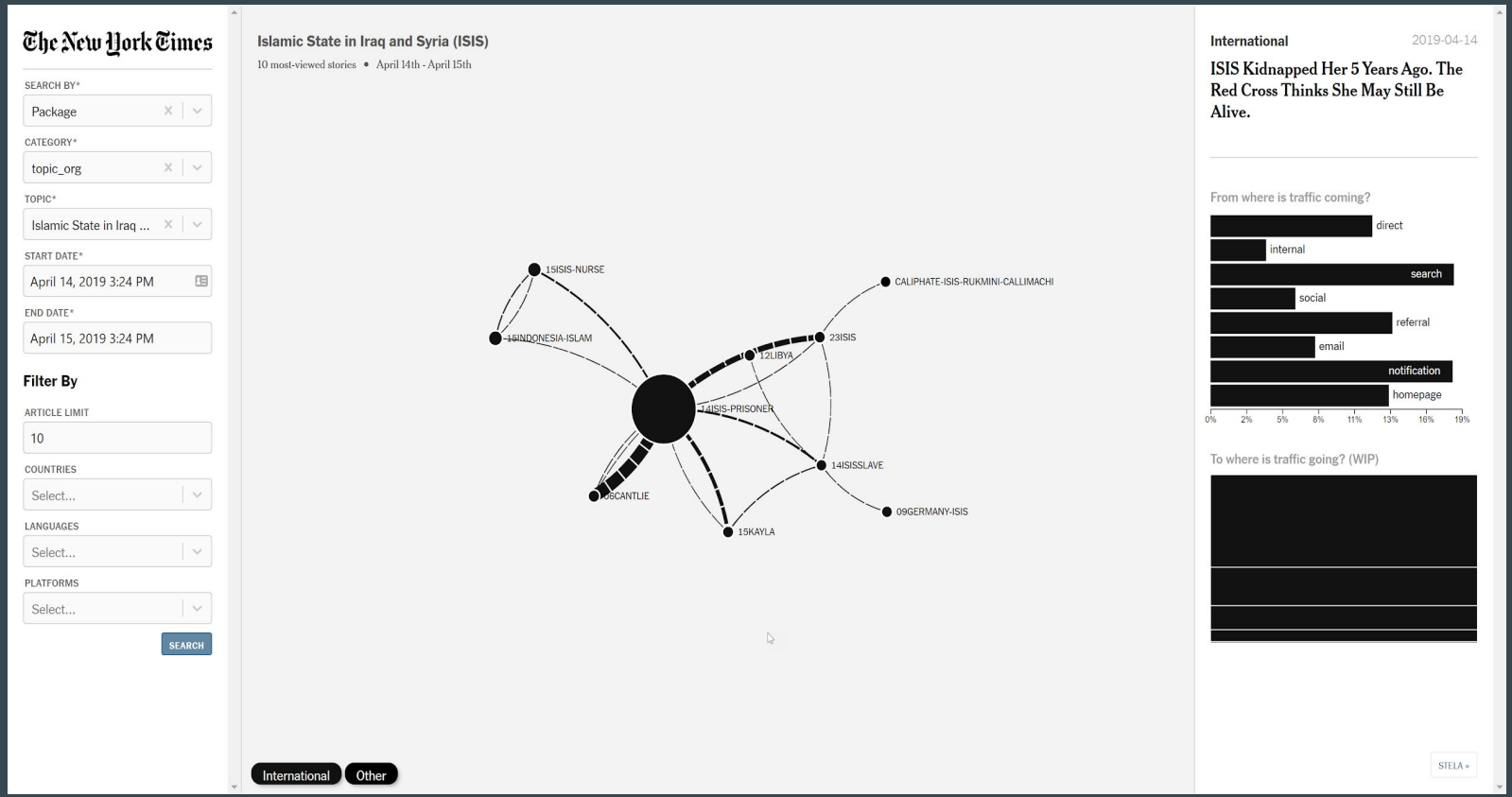
Kennedy's Son Arrives

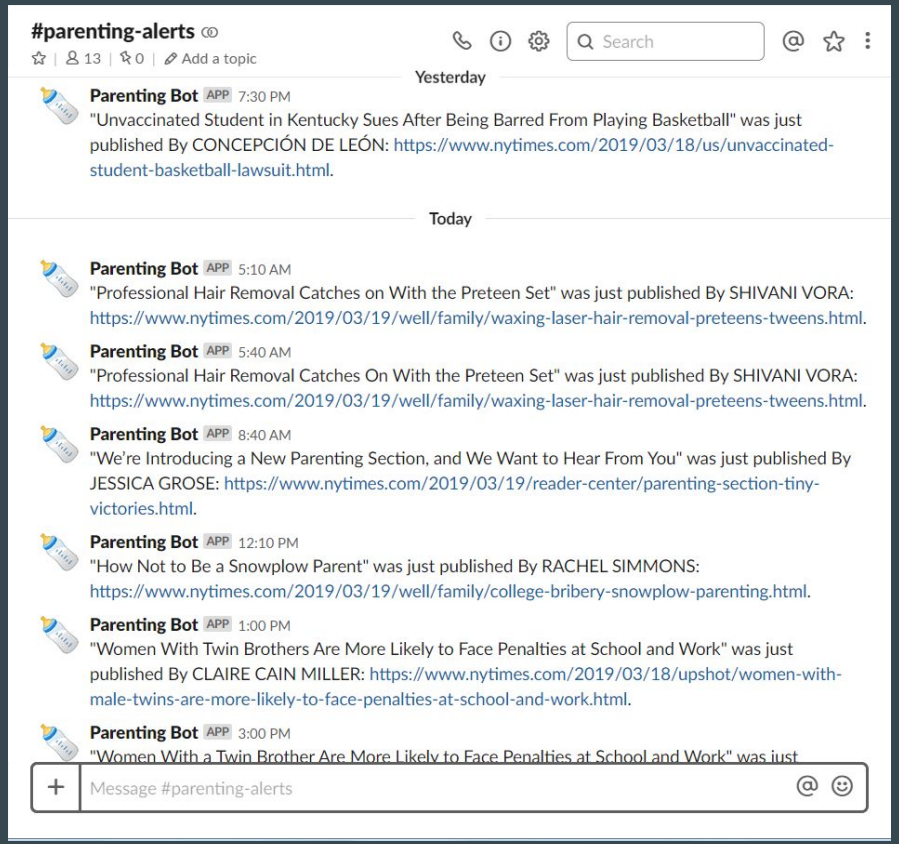
John F. Kennedy, son of the United States Ambassador to Great Britain, returned from England yesterday on the North German Lloyd liner Bremen, which brought 1,981 passengers from Bremen and Channel ports. He is returning to begin his junior year at Harvard University. Another passenger was Benson Ford, son of Edsel Ford, who has completed a six-weeks' tour of France, England, Switzerland and Germany.

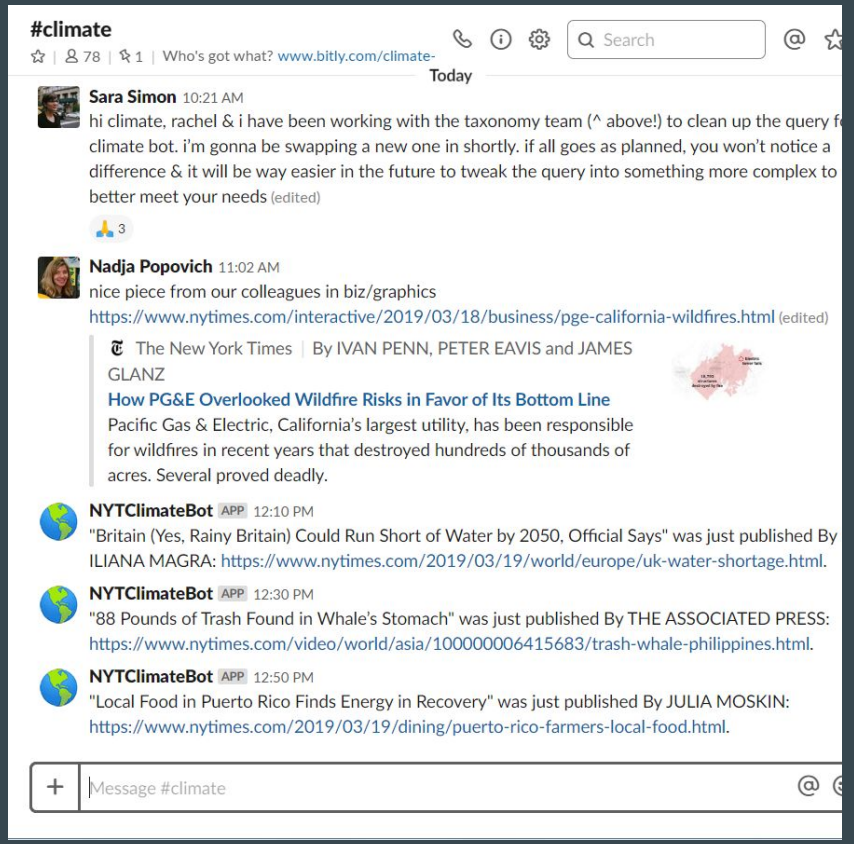
Package Mapper

- Each circle represents an article, sized by how much traffic the article is getting
- Lines in between tell what an article is linked to.
- Something in the middle is well linked to other assets, something out at the edge is not.

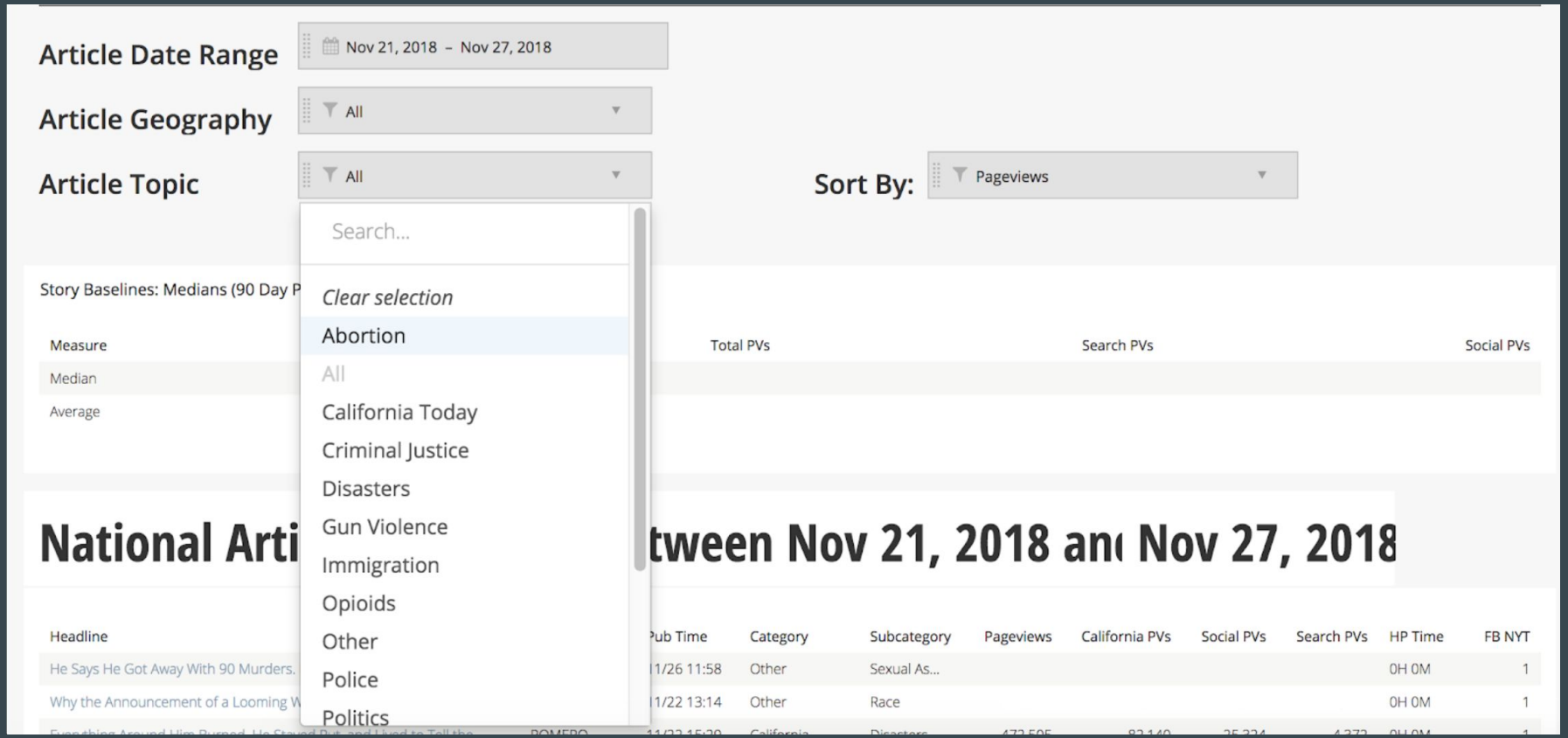


Slackbots/Newsroom Alerts





Newsroom Desk Dashboards



Challenges

- Production is labor intensive
  - Taxonomists spend a large portion of the day dealing with newsroom requests and checking tagging
  - 3 people cover 7 days/week 365 days of year
- Training
  - A lot of time invested in training
  - Some newsroom folks respond better to tagging than others
- Software
  - We are about to start a migration to new, more intelligent rules-based classification software
  - We are hoping that this migration will allow us to decrease the number of manual tasks by allowing us the freedom to build more custom tooling and possibly employ some machine learning

Questions?

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