

Analyzing the Social Media Footprint of Street Gangs







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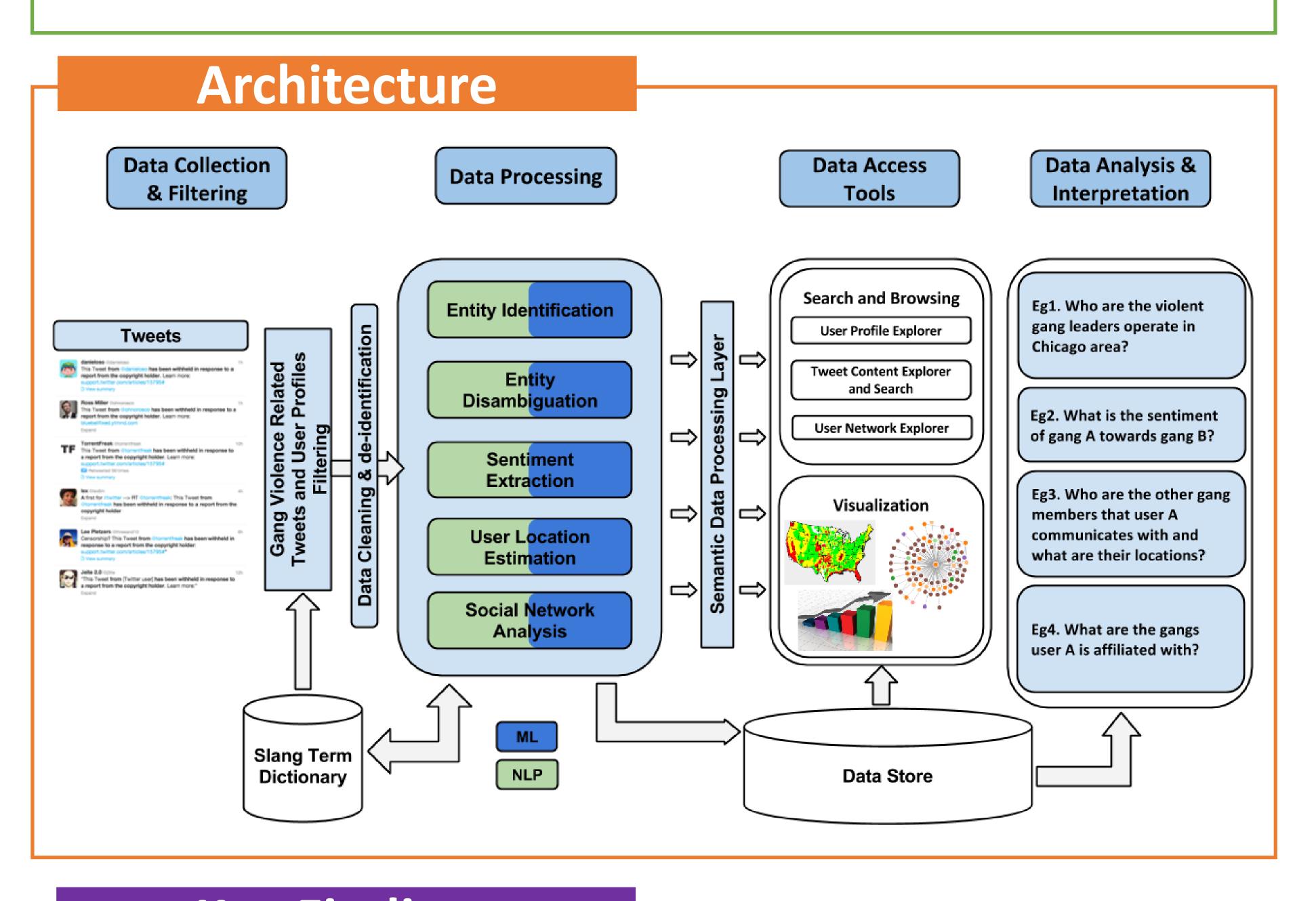


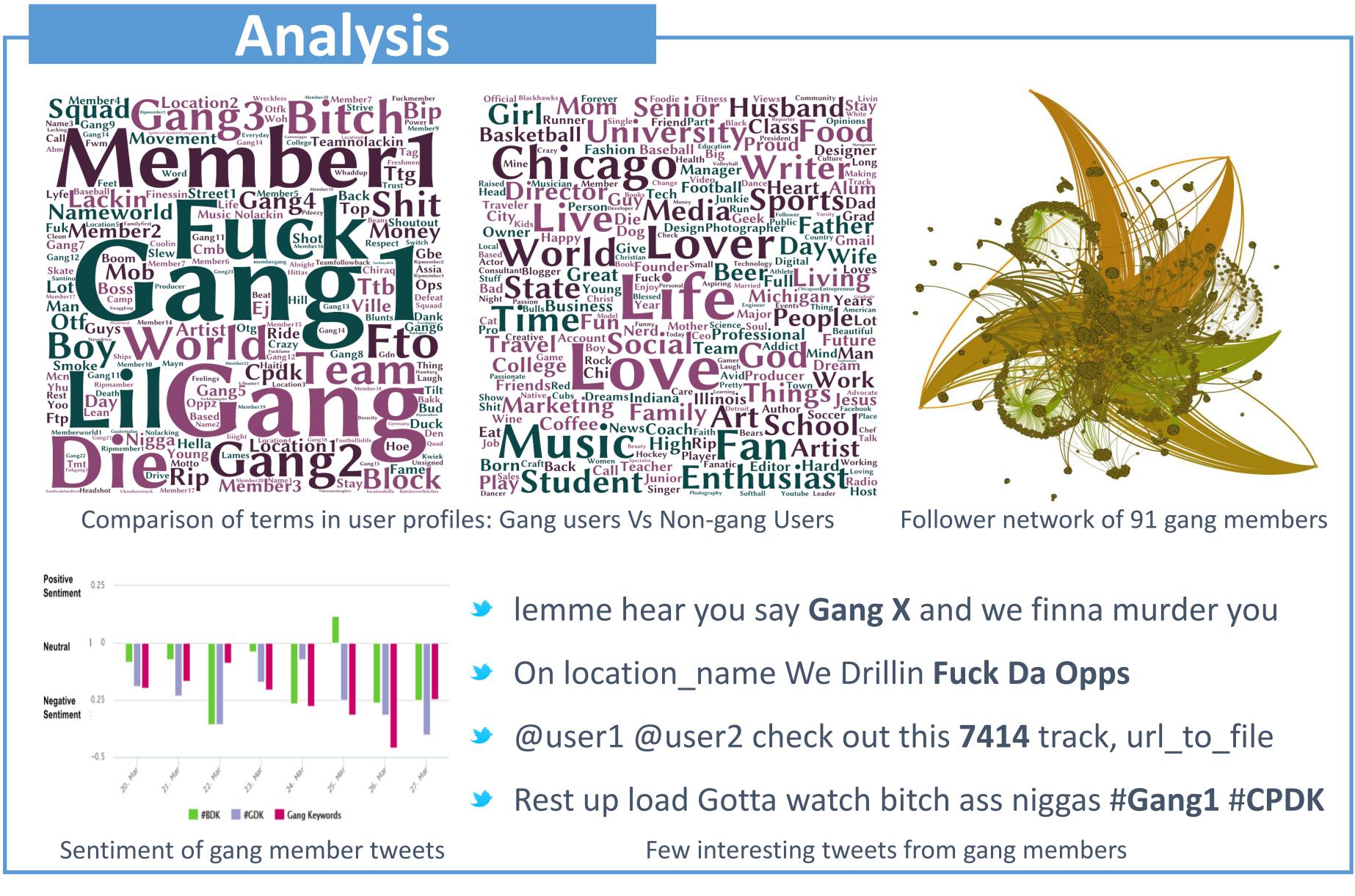
Motivation

- ✓ Gangs utilize social media as a way to maintain threatening virtual presences, to communicate about their activities, and to intimidate others.
- ✓ Justice Service Agencies use analysis methods that are labor intensive and only lead to basic, qualitative data interpretations.

Platform Requirements

- ✓ Monitor negative community effects of gang activities
- ✓ Discover opinion leaders who influence the thoughts and actions of other gang members
- ✓ Evaluate the sentiment of posts targeting communities, locations, and groups





Key Findings

- ✓ Gang members use gang names, fallen gang member names and gang related slang to identify themselves on social media. Such features can be used to identify social media profiles of gang members automatically.
- ✓ Gang members tend to have small but well connected social networks. This may suggest that the followers represent very strong offline bonds in real world. Analysis of the follower network identified possible gang members other than the 91 subjects examined in the study.
- ✓ Gang members' Tweets are inherently negative in sentiment. Advanced sentiment analysis conditioned on negativity may be necessary.