Outline

- Basic overview of Voyant
- Voyant Comparison of Corpuses
- Additional Voyant Tools
- Voyant vs Topic Modelling
- What Questions can Voyant answer?
Basic Overview of Voyant

● What is Voyant?
● How to use Voyant?
Sample Corpus of Mississippi Slave Ads:

http://voyant-tools.org/?corpus=1393265199753.9333
Arkansas Runaway Slaves: 1820-1865

S. Charles Bolton University of Arkansas-Little Rock (February 2013)

1820

20 July 1820 Arkansas Gazette (September 9, 1820) 30 Dollars Reward Ran away from the subscriber, near St. Francisville, on the 11 of June last, a Negro Man, named PHILL, he is of a light complexion; broad flat nose and large mouth, lips turning out; about five feet 10 inches high, speakes freely, and rather through the nose; he can read print, and has a bible and psalm book with him; he took with him two silver and one gilt watch, the latter an old one; he also has a free paper, in which he is called John Winson; and has some ruffled shirts marked "J. Miller", which he carried in a knapsack. A reward of 20 dollars will be given, if confined in any jail so that I can get him again; or the above reward, with reasonable charges, if brought home. BARTLETT COLLINS Parish of E. Feliciana, Lou.

4 November 1820 Arkansas Gazette (January 6, 1821) $150 Reward Ran away from my plantation, Lincoln county, Tennessee, on the first day of August last, a Negro man named JACK. He is about 6 feet high, a dark mulatto, broad shoulders, rather inclined to be round, high cheek bones, thin jawed, thin lips, large hands and feet, and rather an impediment in his speech, dejected countenance when spoken to, and very fond of spirituous liquors, a large scar on his breast, on the left side, and under the left nipple, and has been passing by the name of DAVE; he is a tolerable good shoemaker, and an excellent hand at the whip-saw. Any person apprehending said fellow and confining him in any jail in Tennessee or Kentucky, shall have the above reward, or one hundred dollars, if confined to any jail in the United States, so that I get him again; or the above reward for the delivery of said fellow to me, at Bradshaws Creek, Giles county, Tennessee, with common expenses. Any person taking up said Negro, will direct their letters to Pulaski, Giles county, Tennessee. JOHN HOLCOMB November 4, 1820.
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The editors of the following newspapers will please insert this advertisement six times in their papers, and forward their papers to the Editor of the Nashville Whig, to whom the money will be paid according to their usual terms of advertising.

John H. Holcomb, 1820.

...
1) Arkansas Runaway Slaves

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Mississippi vs Arkansas
Applying Voyant to Runaway Slave Ads

- Uploaded advertisements from Arkansas (1820-1865) and Mississippi (1800-1860)
How to Split a Corpus?

1. A single document of all advertisements
2. Split by time units (in this case, decades)
3. Split by individual ad (with the help of Dr. McDaniel’s walk-through of Regular Expressions)
4. Split by geographical location (AR vs MS)

➤ Choice about how to split depends on what you want to track/compare.
Ran away from the subscriber, near St. Francisville, on the 11th of June last, a Negro Man, named PHILL, he is of a light complexion; broad flat nose and large mouth, lips turning out;

about five feet 10 inches high, speaks free, and rather through the nose; he can read print, and

has a bible and psalm book with him; he took with him two silver and one gilt watch, the latter

an old one; he also has a free paper, in which he is called John Wisco...
Arkansas split by decade

1820
20 July 1820
Arkansas Gazette (September 9, 1820)
30 Dollars Reward
Ran away from the subscriber, near St. Francisville, on the 11th of June last, a Negro Man.
named PHILL., he is of a light complexion; broad flat nose and large mouth, lips turning out;
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confined in any jail so that I can get him again; or the above reward, with reasonable changes, if
1) 1-April-1863-xqd.txt

NEWAD

1 April 1863

Washington Telegraph (April 1, 1863)

$50 reward th

Ranaway from the undersigned on the 5

about 30 years old and about 5 feet 5 or 6 inches high, with an upper front tooth out. Had on when he left a hat a won sattin coat, of a brownish color, and home made linsey pants.

T. H. TURNER

Daingerfield, Titus Co, TX.

2) 1-August-1851-xms.txt

NEWAD

1 August 1851

Arkansas Gazette (August 8, 1851)

Notice is Hereby Given

That a certain Negro man calling himself GEORGE, was committed to my custody as a runaway slave on the 25th of July 1851. Said Negro

Arkansas split by individual ad
Comparison of Arkansas, 1820-1865, and Mississippi, 1800-1860
Applying Voyant to Texas Ads

- Comparing Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas ads for 1837
- Transcribed *Telegraph and Texas Register* ads from the Portal to Texas History
- Limitation of Voyant (for our project)
Comparison of Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas for 1837

1) Arkansas 1837.docx

1837

9 January 1837

Arkansas Gazette (March 28, 1837)

$200 Reward

On the 5th of this month was feloniously taken and carried off, out of the possession of

PERMILIA CARTER, residing in the county of Jackson, State of Tennessee, by a certain

Richard Carter, of said county, a yellow Negro woman slave, by name JEMIMA, the property of

said Permelia, of the following description: Jemima is about 17 years old, and of a light bright

yellow color, common size, and is a very likely woman, wears her hair tolerably long, now in

about the middle state of a pregnant situation. Richard Carter was armed with a loaded rifle,

pistols and dirk, about thirty-four years old, rather of a thin visage, dark colonial hair, sandy
Additional Voyant Tools

http://docs.voyant-tools.org/tools/
Voyant vs. Topic Modelling

- How does Voyant compare to Mallet? (a tool we are all familiar with)
- Different approaches to text analysis
Topic Modelling applied to Arkansas corpus
Questions that Voyant can help us answer

● Are runaway trends in Texas different from other areas of the U.S. (and if so, how)?
● Visualization of runaway ads
● What changes in terminology occurred over time?