Autism Discourse in the U.S.

An Exploratory Analysis

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The Research Question

To what degree are autonomy and treatment concerns for:

- Advocacy organizations
- Government Agencies
- Individuals (Bloggers etc.)
More realistic

● How do autism bloggers speak about family roles?
  ○ There do seem to be some differences about the way family roles are expressed, in the blogs especially.

● Can we see differences in sentiment between February and March, given that April is Autism Awareness Month?
  ○ There seems to be little difference in sentiment from February to March 2014.
  ○ Organizations seem less emotive prior to autism awareness month.
  ○ Bloggers do not seem to change their emotive language from month to month.
Tools

- Jupyter Notebook
  - Python and NLTK
  - Dispersion: 8000 records, 7 step jump → > 1000 records
  - Sentiment: 800000 records, 100 step jump -> 8000 records
- Gephi - network analysis
Gender and Autism (?)
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Network Analysis - Degree of Mom versus Dad

Indegree: 6 Outdegree: 2178

Indegree: 7 Outdegree: 315
Online Searches for “Autism”

- autism
- Aspergers
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders

United States, 2004 - present

Chart showing trends in online searches for terms related to autism.
Further Questions

● What is the research question?
  ○ Research question applied to corpus, corpus inform research question, research question applied to corpus
● How to incorporate context?
● How does corpus change over time?
● Can we look more closely at organizational vs individual relationship?