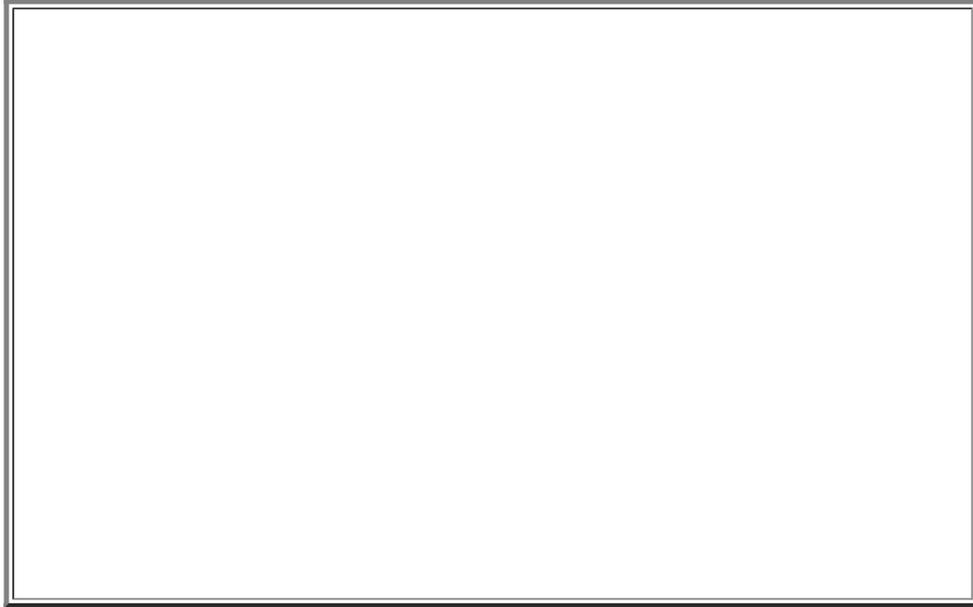


Obama on economy -- controlling the conversation?

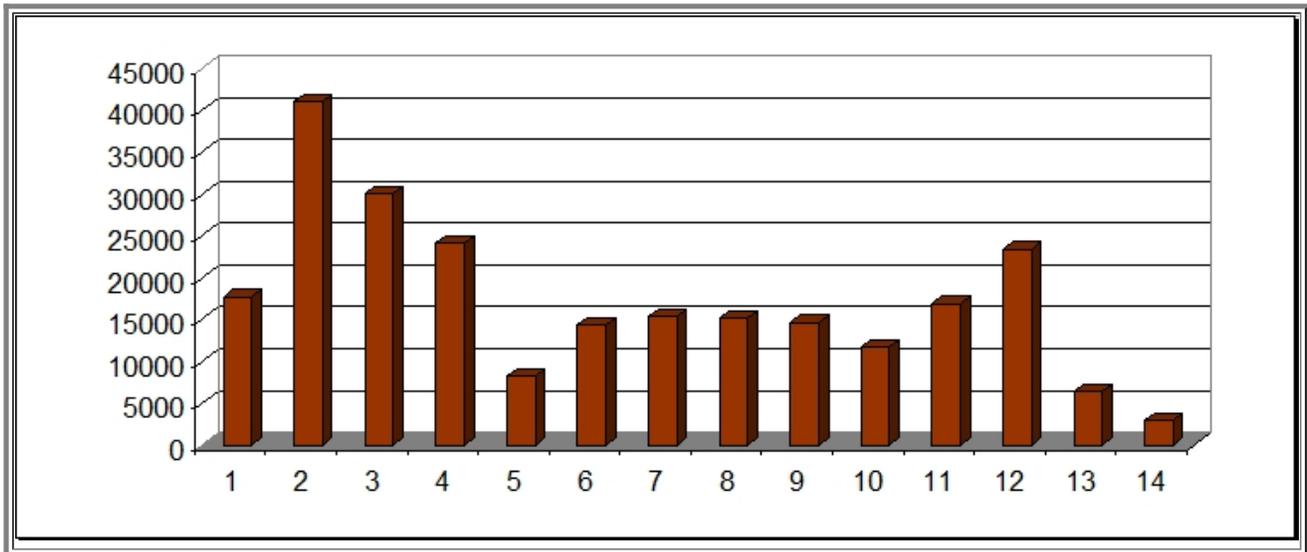
The question is: what happens when no one is paying attention?

The question is inspired by the decreasing attention to Obama's weekly address which reached something close to 'bottom' on October 31, 2009. I do not have an answer. What I can do at this point is suggest that no one is paying attention.

The address of the week was titled "Weekly Address: Milestones on the Economy and the Recovery Act"



It was posted to YouTube Friday evening, and I checked the views Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. It had, at that point, been viewed 2,972 times. The figure below shows the comparable views of the weekly address on Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. beginning with the July 31 weekly address and running through October 31.



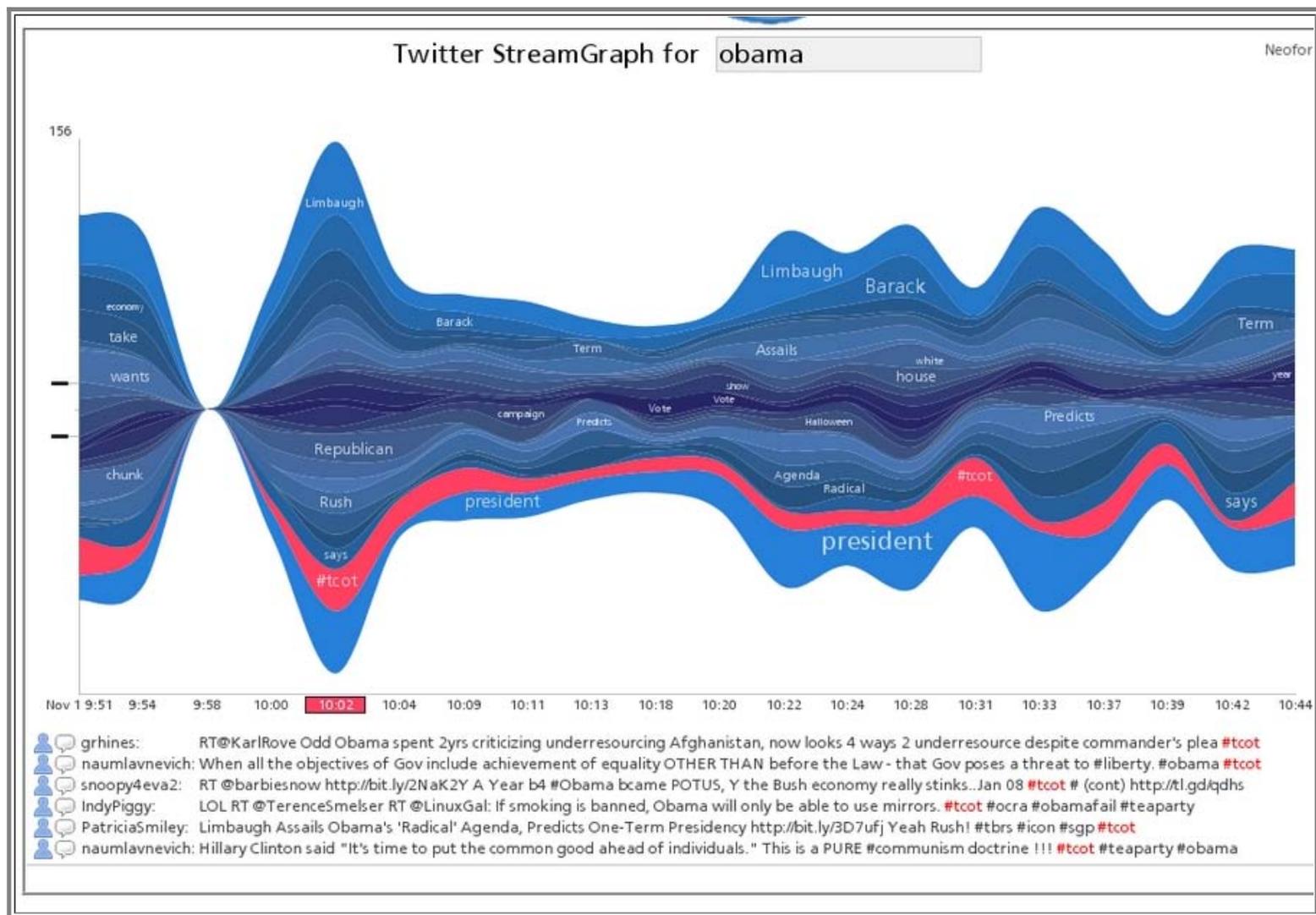
The trend is down with a few deviations.

Was it the subject of the address? The subject was the economy. Concern about the economy is widespread. There had been good news in the form of a larger than expected GDP, at 3.5%, and the stock market topping 10,000 for the first time in a couple of years. There was some good news to report.

Even if not viewed very often it might have been the subject of substantial microblogging. So I did a search for tweets using the phrases "Obama economy new data" and "Obama economy." The first because there were a number of messages saying Obama had referred to new data about the improving economy. By 4:30 in the afternoon of November 1 "Obama economy new

data" had been used in messages 469 times. "Obama economy" had been used in messages 1522 times. There were even fewer messages than views.

If they were not paying attention to his talk about the economy perhaps they were not paying attention to Obama at all. So I did a search for Obama with Twitter StreamGraph.



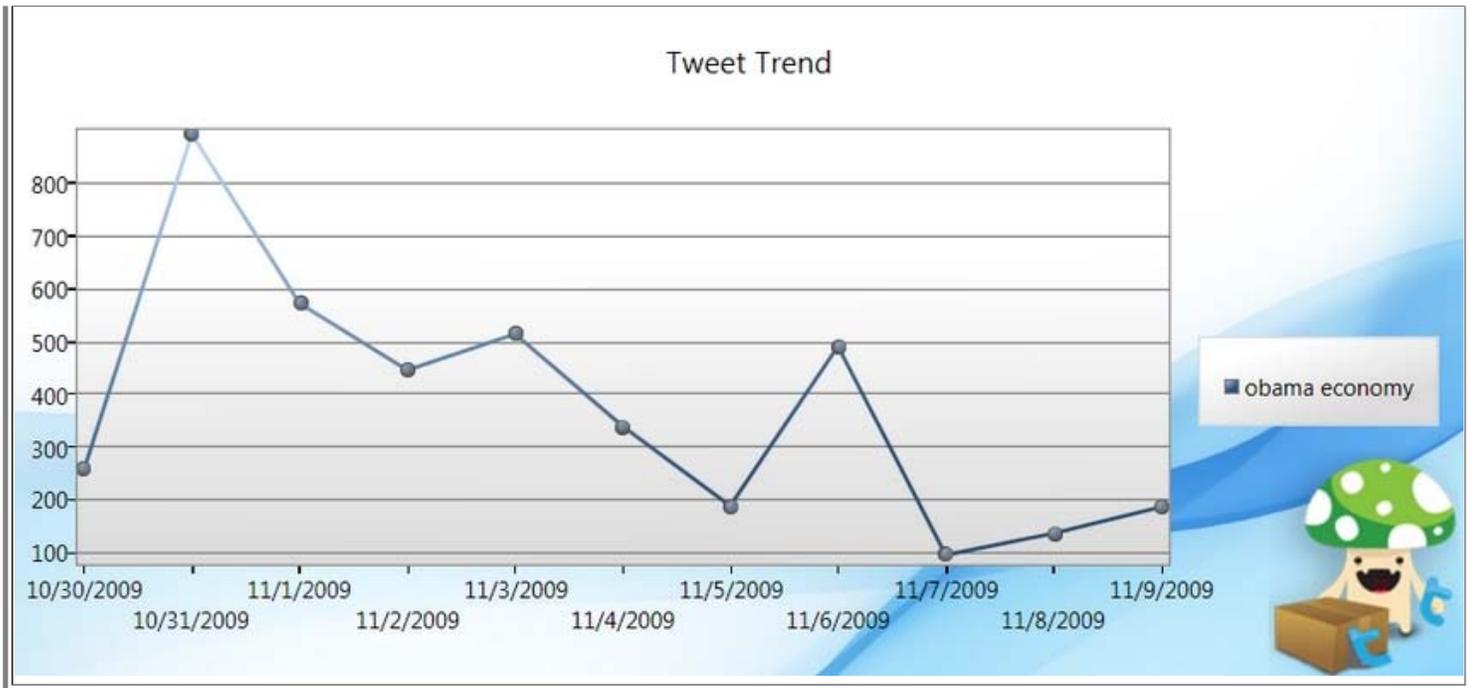
Between 9:51 a.m. and 10:44 there were a thousand messages including "Obama." That is a reasonably substantial stream. During the same 54 minutes there were no messages mentioning Obama joined with the word economy.

The Obama administration has been the object of much complaining about the slow recovery of the economy. There was good news, and Mr. Obama -- we can assume -- wanted to call peoples' attention to the good news. It is difficult to make out how that could have happened from this data.

November 8, 2009 it is time to stop the search. The numbers never got very big; just over 800 was the spike of the day. And the messages moved from the presidential weekly address to more general questions and statements about Obama and the economy.

The final number of messages was 4067. The final timeline was





The .txt file that can be read by Excel to acquire the data is: [obama_economy.txt](#)