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280 Insulting Characters?
An Analysis of the Content of Tweets Addressed to the Police in
Canada and the United States

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Résumé

Les réseaux sociaux tel Twitter sont de plus en plus populaires. Il n'est donc pas surprenant que la police s'engage sur ce terrain. Les réseaux sociaux permettent à la police de communiquer facilement avec la population dans un espoir d'amélioration de leur relation avec les citoyens qui peut parfois être tendue. Avec la démocratisation d'internet et l'avènement des réseaux sociaux, les incivilités qui auparavant étaient limitées au monde réel se sont transposées en ligne. La police est donc parfois la cible de ces cyber-incivilités. Bien que l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux par la police ait été étudié ces dernières années, la manière dont la population communique avec la police, surtout lorsqu'elle le fait de manière antagoniste, n'a été l'objet que de quelques recherches seulement. La présente étude cherche à combler ce manque dans la littérature en analysant ce qui est dit à la police sur le réseau social Twitter. Les tweets de janvier 2018 mentionnant les départements de police sélectionnés au Canada et aux Etats-Unis ont été collectés. Les résultats démontrent que certains départements de police sont plus mentionnés que d'autres (c'est que le cas du TPS et de la NYPD) mais aussi plus insultés que d'autres. La police se retrouve au milieu de tensions puisqu'elle est la cible de plusieurs insultes. Les tweets mentionnant la police ont les thèmes suivants : cas spécifiques, comportement de la police, politique, histoires locales mais sont également composés d'insultes gratuites, sans contexte. L'étude conclue que les tensions en ligne, qu'elles soient ponctuelles ou systématiques, répliquent les tensions locales déjà présentes hors ligne.

Mots-clés : Twitter, police, cyber-incivilités, insultes

Abstract

Social media such as Twitter are becoming more popular. It is without surprise that the police would engage in this field. Social media allow the police to easily communicate with the population in the hope to ameliorate the relationship between the police and citizens, which can be tense at times. With the democratisation of the internet and the advent of social media, incivilities which were limited to the real world have been transposed online. The police are therefore sometimes the target of these cyber-incivilities. Even if the use of social media by the police has been studied in the last few years, the way the population communicates with the police, especially when they do in an antagonistic manner, has not been researched thoroughly. The present study aims to fill this literature gap by analysing what is said to the police on Twitter. Tweets from January 2018 mentioning the selected police departments in Canada and in the United States have been collected. The results show that some police departments are more mentioned than others (it is the case of the TPS and the NYPD) but also more insulted than others. The police are caught in the middle of tensions as they are the target of several insults. Tweets mentioning the police have the following themes: specific cases, police behaviour, politics, local news but are also comprised of plain insults, without context. The study concludes that online tensions, whether they are punctual or systematic, resonate the already existent offline local tensions.

Keywords : Twitter, police, cyber-incivility, insults

Table of contents

Résumé.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Table of contents.....	iii
List of tables.....	v
List of figures.....	vi
List of acronyms.....	vii
List of abbreviations.....	viii
Acknowledgments.....	x
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1. Literature review.....	3
1.1. The relationship between the police and the public.....	3
1.2. Twitter and the police.....	7
1.3. Cybercrime or cyber-incivility?.....	11
Chapter 2. Problem Statement.....	15
Chapter 3. Methodology.....	17
3.1. Data.....	17
3.2. Procedure.....	20
3.3. Social Media Ethics.....	22
3.4. Limits of the Methodology.....	24
Chapter 4. Results.....	26
4.1. Overview.....	26
4.1.1. Characteristics of tweets and users.....	26
4.1.2. Most mentioned police departments.....	27
4.2. Tension.....	30
4.2.1. Characteristics of tweets and users.....	30
4.2.2. Most potentially insulted police accounts.....	33
4.2.3. Content analysis of tweets.....	36
Chapter 5. Discussion.....	41
Conclusion.....	44

Integration of criminalistics	46
Bibliography	50
Appendix A. List of studied Twitter accounts in Canada.....	i
Appendix B. Maps of studied Twitter accounts in Canada	ix
Appendix C. List of studied Twitter accounts in the United States of America.....	xii
Appendix D. Maps of studied Twitter accounts in the United States of America.....	xvi
Appendix E. List of studied insults.....	xviii

List of tables

Table I.	List of studied variables.....	19
Table II.	List of variables used for the content analysis of tweets.....	22
Table III.	Languages used in tweets.....	26
Table IV.	Most used platforms to tweet.....	27
Table V.	Sentiment analysis of tweets.....	30
Table VI.	Median characteristics of top 10 users in Canada.....	31
Table VII.	Median characteristics of top 10 users in the USA.....	32
Table VIII.	Targets in insulting tweets.....	37
Table IX.	General themes of tweets with swearwords.....	38

List of figures

Figure 1.	Overview of the location of the studied accounts in Canada.....	17
Figure 2.	Overview of the location of the studied accounts in the United States	18
Figure 3.	Top ten most mentioned police departments in Canada	28
Figure 4.	Top ten most mentioned police department in the USA.....	29
Figure 5.	Top ten most potentially insulted police departments in Canada	34
Figure 6.	Top ten most potentially insulted police departments in the USA	35

List of acronyms

API : Application Programming Interface

e.g. : *exempli gratia*

GRC : Gendarmerie Royale du Canada

LAPD : Los Angeles Police Department

NYPD : New York Police Department

RCMP : Royal Canadian Mounted Police

TPS : Toronto Police Service

USA : United States of America

List of abbreviations

Av. : Average

Med. : Median

Max. : Maximum

Min. : Minimum

This research is dedicated to my family who has given me their support during my studies abroad and to the ones who have made this journey in Montreal such a pleasure: Louis, Elodie, Zoé, Zoë, Camille, Alfredo. I wish you all the happiness in the world and success but remember that where we're going, we don't need roads.

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Introduction

On December 23rd 2017, Mathieu Kassowitz insulted on Twitter police officers who had just conducted an operation that he estimated unnecessary. The French actor and director, known for, amongst others, his role in the film *Amélie* [Original title: *Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain*] is followed by thousands of users on the social media (<https://twitter.com/kassovitz1>). His tweet did not go unnoticed and received backlash from police unions (Europe 1, 2017). As of June 2018, the tweet has not been removed from Twitter. However, insulting the police online does not always lead to the same reaction. A few years ago, the city of Granby in Quebec decided to ban online insults to police officers (CBC News, 2015). In this city, the behaviour can potentially lead to a fine between 100 and 1000 Canadian dollars.

Social media have been popular for years. While some sites have seen major decreases in their use (such as MySpace), others have grown in popularity. It is the case of Facebook, which has recently reached two billion accounts (Titcomb, 2017) or Twitter with roughly 328 million users per month (Bloomberg, 2017). Twitter is a microblogging platform which allows one to write short messages of 280 characters maximum. The length of messages has been increased from the classic 140 characters only recently. Several interactions are possible: tweet, like (also known as favourites), reply, retweet (which means reporting someone else's tweet on your timeline) and mention (tag other accounts). Twitter has a few particularities when compared to other social media. Firstly, statuses are limited in their length, which is not the case on Facebook for instance. Secondly, there is an absence of link reciprocity. Users can be followed by others without having to follow them back, which demonstrates a demarcation from the concept of *friends* on Facebook. This allows users to be updated from local news accounts or high profile celebrities. Lastly, Twitter incorporates the use of hashtags which are words referring to specific topics after the sign # (see Tsur and Rappoport, 2012 for more details). As a result, tweets referring to a particular subject and containing the hashtag, such as a soccer game during the World Cup, would all be gathered in one place on Twitter.

It is therefore not surprising that the police would use these types of platforms to communicate with the public in an easy and fast fashion. However, as the above examples demonstrate, while still providing great advantages such as worldwide communication, Twitter

has drawbacks. Social media can have an impact on conflict (Zeitsoff, 2017). It is also the theater of cyberhate which has only recently been identified as an issue with the advent of forums and social media (Williams and Pearson, 2016). The police, with their online presence, can also be the target of cyber-incivilities and even threats. It is in this perspective that is inscribed the present research. It aims to examine insults sent on Twitter to police departments in Canada and the United States. To fulfill this aim, the literature review will first explore the relationship between the police and public which can be caught in the middle of tensions. It will then show how the police use Twitter before giving attention to cyber-incivilities, which are at the core of the present study. After presenting the problematic, the methodology section will outline the strategies put in place in order to analyse the issue at interest. The results will be subsequently discussed in two parts: an overview will first be given before focussing on the topic of tension. These results will be put into context in the wider academic literature. The conclusion will provide a short summary of the research but also explain the possibilities for law enforcement applications and future research. Lastly, explanations will be given on how criminalistics can be integrated into this criminological research.

Chapter 1. Literature review

1.1. The relationship between the police and the public

The relationship between the police and the public is a complicated one while at the same time being a critical one. In this section, the different tensions that can impact on this relationship will be presented before giving attention to strategies that aim to ameliorate this relation. Cooperation with the public is crucial when it comes to reporting crime as well as witnessing (Palmiotto, 2011). However, the average citizen does not encounter the police on a regular basis and, when they do, it is not necessarily in positive settings (e.g. crime reporting, traffic violation...). The betterment of this relationship is not aided by the stressful situations they regularly occur in. Moreover, the relationship between the police and the public may differ depending on the local culture. As such, practices embedded in the culture as well as norms and institutions present in the society impact on the individuals' self-construal of independence or interdependence (Gardner, Gabriel and Lee, 1999). Tensions may differ depending on the country with its own political strains, local issues, policing structure and strategies. For instance, the relationship may be clashing in urban areas with high crime rates but at the same time be peaceful in rural areas. However, there appears to be two main types of tension that can impact this relationship: punctual tensions and systematic ones.

Punctual tensions may appear because of police encounters. According to Skogan (2005), people's experiences as well as the way the police act when encountering citizens have an impact on satisfaction with the police, particularly when this encounter is initiated by the police. The way the police respond is correlated with levels of satisfaction (Reisig and Stroschine Chandek, 2001). Furthermore, the believed application of fairness in the work of the police can result in a certain feeling of policing legitimacy (Tyler, 1990). Surprisingly, the impact of encounters on police satisfaction or dissatisfaction can also be vicarious. The experiences lived through story telling by close ones, have an influence on attitudes towards law enforcement (Rosenbaum, Schuck, Costello, Hawkins and Ring, 2005). However, negative encounters appear to have a more substantial impact on the relationship. A research by Skogan (2006) concluded that the levels of general confidence are impacted by bad experiences with the police

(Li, Ren and Luo, 2016), four to fourteen times more than positive ones as the latter almost do not have any incidence on these levels. The 2013 Canadian General Social Survey concluded a confidence rate in the police of 76% (Cotter, 2015). The statistics are not as elevated across the border as the current confidence rate in the United States is at 57% (Norman, 2017). While this figure matches the average of the last 25 years, the overall proportion has been quite fluctuating over time. The differences between the two countries could potentially be accounted for by differences in methodology but could also be the result of different local systematic tensions despite having fairly similar policing structures.

There may be systematic tensions present locally that can impact heavily on the quality of the relationship between the police and the community. Some police officers appear to have negative views over citizen cooperation when it comes to disadvantaged communities (Shjarback, Nix and Wolfe, 2017). Officers may feel unappreciated, which in turn can lead to abrasive behaviour (Palmiotto, 2011), perpetuating a circle of bad experiences and deteriorating this fragile relationship. On the other side of the relationship, some categories of the population, when compared to the others, tend to perceive the police in a negative manner. It is the case of young people and visible minorities (O'Connor, 2008). Indeed, ethnicity (especially when visible), age and language impact on police assistance, communication and effort, which in turn have consequences on police satisfaction (Skogan, 2005). The subject of discrimination and racism within police organisations has been widely studied (for a study on perception see, for instance, Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). Added to the police perception, discretionary powers, the relationship between the officers and the organisation as well as between the police and other actors in the same line of work, racism in police organisations is one of the tension generating problems that occurs between the population and the police (Delpeuch, Ross and Bonnet, 2017).

In Canada, the last General Social Survey found that visible minority ethnic populations have slightly higher confidence in public institutions than non minorities (Cotter, 2015). While these results have to be interpreted with caution as they englobe all public institutions, the results concerning the United States differ. A Gallup poll revealed that the confidence rate in the police depended on ethnicity (with the minority ethnic groups having less confidence), political ideology (conservatives having more confidence than others) as well as age (lower confidence associated with lower age) (Norman, 2017). While there are tensions in both countries, they may be different and are surely more mediatised in the United States than in Canada. There is a

general tension partly due to the history of the country, which may have an impact on how visible ethnic minorities perceive the public institution that is the police (O'Connor, 2008). For instance, the immigration policies in place in the country tend to evolve around the promotion of the American culture, whereas Canada leans toward the celebration of all cultures (O'Connor, 2008). Questions have been raised lately by the immigration policies put in place by the Trump administration. The ban of several countries in which Islam is the main religion is the first policy of its kind (Pierce and Selee, 2017). Another example concerns the construction of a wall between the United States and Mexico, which is part of the national security strategy of the White House (The White House, 2017).

These systematic tensions have consequences on the everyday lives of citizens. In the United States, Black men perceived that they are stereotyped as criminals when they encounter the police (Najdowski, Bottoms and Atiba Goff, 2015). In New York City, stop-and-frisks are subjected to a bias towards people of African and Hispanic descent compared to white people, with a control for crime participation and geographical variations (Gelman, Fagan and Kiss, 2007). One fourth of those killed by the police in 2017 were African American, while they make up for only 13% of the country's population (Mapping Police Violence, 2018). While there are signs of racism and discrimination by the police in the country, the media discourse forgets to acknowledge for inter-department differences as it puts all agencies at the same level (Weitzer, 2015). These numbers evoke ethnic discriminations present in the society but the last statistics about police killings also relates to another cause of tension: that of the gun culture. It is something that is peculiar to the United States. Almost a third of its residents own a gun (Igielnik and Brown, 2017). In the country, there is an estimate of almost 90 firearms per 100 residents versus 31 in Canada, three times less (Small Arms Survey, 2011). Furthermore, police shootings resulting in deaths are relatively frequent in the country. There were approximately 1000 instances of deaths by the police in 2017 (The Washington Post, 2018). There is therefore a context of societal unrest, especially that in the United States, that appear to impact on the relationship between the police and citizens.

The relationship between the police and the population can be difficult to grasp and has to be studied within its local particular environment. However, strategies have been put in place in order to ameliorate this relationship. It is the case of community policing, which is composed of several elements (United States Department of Justice, 2014): an organizational

transformation at different levels such as the personnel or the technologies and systems that are used for police work; community partnerships with diverse services such as private or government agencies; and problem solving evolving around the triangle of crime (offender, victim, location) and the SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment; Eck and Spelman, 1987). Community policing is about moving away from standardisation by replacing it by discretion at the lower levels of the hierarchy to allow a decentralisation of the organisation (Peak and Glensor, 2012). Following the angle of the broken windows theory (Wilson and Kelling, 1982), in which an environment where civil unrest prevails encourages the commitment of more crime, community policing is inscribed in the addressing of the societal decay to avoid the amplification of issues (Peak and Glensor, 2012).

There are many examples and a wide variety of community policing programs in both studied countries. For instance, in Calgary (Alberta, Canada), the Youth at Risk Development Program aims at preventing gang involvement through training, counselling and recreational activities for young persons, a program that has been successful according to the authorities (Guyn Cooper Research Associates Ltd., 2014). In the United States, the Seattle (Washington) Police Activities League allows officers to be mentors to youngsters and promote a stimulating environment in order to decrease crime (Seattle Police Department, 2018). Those are just two possibilities of the spectrum of community policing. The population seems to value these types of programs more than officers, which in term could impact on the implementation and efficiency of such action plans (Liederback, Fritsch, Carter and Bannister, 2008). Furthermore, the political context, especially terrorism, threatens community policing (Liederback, Fritsch, Carter and Bannister, 2008). However, one of the aspects of this type of policing evolves around the establishment of an effective communication between the police and the public (Greene, 2000). It is in this perspective that are inscribed online communication strategies of law enforcement agencies. While the relationship between the population and the police is subjected to many tensions and needs to be understood within the wider local culture, how the police present themselves and interact with the society on the internet also appear important in the 21st century.

1.2. Twitter and the police

In this section, the reasons why the police use social media will be presented as well as the way the public responds to their posts. Communication strategies and work on the image of the police is not new (Mawby, 2002) but ten years ago, police forces in the United Kingdom started showing interest in social media (Crump, 2011). Already in 2013, more than three quarters of the largest police departments in the United States had at least one account on Facebook, Twitter or MySpace (Lieberman, Koetzle and Sakiyama, 2013). Similarly, a growth in police use of Twitter in Canada has been observed over the years (Schneider, 2016). The Toronto Police Service has the most active Twitter account in the country (Schneider, 2016). Almost 85 000 tweets have been written by this account since its registration in September 2008 (<https://twitter.com/TorontoPolice>). These numbers are considerable compared to the 16 600 and 18 300 tweets attributed respectively to the Municipal Police of Montreal (<https://twitter.com/SPVM>) and the New York Police Department (<https://twitter.com/NYPDnews>). This interest for social media is also externalised by strategies such as that of the Toronto Police Service that is currently under revision (Toronto Police Service, 2017), guides as well as media departments within police forces (Crump, 2011) such as that of the Montreal Police (SPVM, 2018). Twitter has indeed some considerable advantages for the police. Firstly, the public's participation is allowed and only has a low cost for citizens (Brainard and Edlins, 2015). They can share their opinion freely or help in a matter of a few seconds or minutes directly from their phone, without having to move. Secondly, the communication on Twitter is not direct. This asynchronicity is preferable for the police (Brainard and Edlins, 2015). If they want to reply to citizens, they can do it whenever possible or wanted and the public can interact at any time of the day. This clashes with daily face-to-face or phone interactions in which the conversation is direct and limited time is granted to information seeking. However, not all police departments agree on the suitable use of social media as it is the case of certain constabularies that express rejection over reputational and safety concerns (Bullock, 2017).

There are four main interconnected reasons that law enforcement agencies use social medias: information, collaboration, getting closer to the public and image management. The first category, information, regroups several categories. In these types of tweets, one would find

information about crimes and investigations, traffic and safety but also police work in general (O'Connor, 2017). According to the same study, they make up for the majority of tweets by Canadian police departments. In the Netherlands, crime and incident reporting represents a quarter of all tweets (Van de Velde, Meijer and Homburg, 2015). However, providing information is not the only goal of the police on Twitter.

The second reason police departments use social media is collaboration. This feature can potentially be beneficial and positive on both sides of the relationship (Harms and Wade, 2017). Interaction with citizens occurs on several levels: encouragement for event attendance, asking for responses as well as responding to tweets and/or mentioning accounts (O'Connor, 2017). This collaboration, while aiding police officers, also entails a certain enhancement of civic engagement. Police departments therefore create partnerships with the public (Harms and Wade, 2017). This sort of interactivity on the part of the population can be enhanced by particular events. For instance, Twitter was used as a collaborative platform during the 2011 riots in England to identify suspects (Panagiotopoulos, Bigdeli and Stams, 2014). This partnership can come in handy in order to spread information and eventually find missing persons in the case, for example, of Amber alerts. While citizen-collaborative and interactive tweets are not the main manner the police use Twitter, they still make up for some parts of the communication. Indeed, 40% of tweets by Canadian police departments were of this nature (O'Connor, 2017). While the studied category is more restricted and cannot be compared to the Canadian study, Van de Velde, Meijer and Homburg (2015) found that 11% of tweets were devoted to the search for witnesses and look outs in the Netherlands.

Collaboration is closely related to the third goal of the use of social media by the police which is getting closer to the public. Social media strategies are inscribed into community policing, especially its collaborative and engagement aspects with the community (Brainard and Edlins, 2015) as well as through the building of relationships (Huang, Wu and Hou, 2017). The presence of the police on social media allows for the development of ties with the population they aim to protect (Schneider, 2016). Crump (2011) suggests that this aim has been reached as the majority of the followers of police Twitter accounts in the United Kingdom are individuals and businesses. On another note, a parallel with other research areas can be drawn here. Studies have shown that, for instance, the use of Twitter by companies' chief executive officers have positive effects on both leadership and relations with the public (Hwang, 2012). Citizen expect

the police to have an online presence (Schneider, 2016) which demonstrates a certain desire for engagement from law enforcement agencies. Not every citizen gets to encounter police officers on a daily basis and, when they do, the nature of this meeting may not be pleasant (e.g. crime reporting or arrest). As a result, Twitter allows for a certain interaction with this institution in a non-adversarial context (Lieberman, Koetzle and Sakiyama, 2013), a context that is not experienced by the entirety of the population. Different strategies are used in order to get closer to the public. For instance, some police departments allow officers to have personal official accounts and/or allow off-duty tweets (Goldsmith, 2015). This permits the diminution of the appearance of authoritarian relationships (Schneider, 2016). In a similar manner, police departments use humour. It is the case of the Spanish National Police, which has been successful thanks to its originality, something that has inspired others such as the French National Police (Courtin, 2014). These humorous touches allow for the display of normality of the police (Schneider, 2016). These strategies put officers and the public on the same level. Furthermore, social media can be seen as yet another source from which intelligence can be gathered (Crump, 2011). For instance, Islamic State *fangirling* can be targeted on Twitter (Ghajar-Khosravi, Kwantes, Derbentseva and Huey, 2016). As a result, solid collaboration with the public may incite citizens to report these types of online deviant behaviours.

Lastly, the fourth reason police use social media is image management. Information and communication technologies can be used to digitally promote transparency (Bertot, Jaeger and Grimes, 2010). Surely the latter can be a goal in itself but the aim of police-media units is to control the police image via social media amongst others (Ellis and McGovern, 2016). This explains why certain topics are not tackled such as that of politics (Schneider, 2016). Furthermore, the use of social media can be part of a political agenda that aim to regain confidence in the organisation (Crump, 2011). While these can be seen, with negative lenses, as only strategies fueling agendas, social media can still enhance relations with the public. However, it appears that the police do not necessarily use it in this fashion. There is a clear lack of interactions with the public: the police do not use their Twitter accounts to engage in conversations with citizens (Heverin and Zach, 2010). One-way interactions happen on Twitter where the public responds or talks to the police but the latters do not reply (Bullock, 2017). This non-responsiveness of the police contrasts with the active participation of the public, which may lead to feelings of frustration (Brainard and Edlins, 2015). Some departments even disable

interactions on social media, when possible, in order to avoid spams or attacks (Brainard and Edlins, 2015). This is partly due to the lack of resources required to tackle these types of issues. Some constabularies in the United Kingdom view the Twitter platform as not adapted for interactions (Bullock, 2017), therefore ripping the supposedly social aspect of social media. Police organisations can in fact learn from businesses' use of these online platforms with keeping in mind that power and relationships are different in the two areas (Davis III, Alves and Sklansky, 2014). Communication is indeed key when it comes to the enhancement of organisations-public relationships (Saffer, Sommerfeldt and Taylor, 2013).

Public engagement from the police' presence on social media can vary. A study on Facebook posts from large municipal police departments in the United States show that the majority of the comments from the public is positive (Huang, Huo, Yao and Chao, 2016). However, it appears that this supportive tone is not widely shared and may depend on the context. It is quite noticeable and measurable on police' Facebook for instance where content concerning certain topics, such as traffic, generate less likes than others (Xu, Fedorowicz and Williams, 2016). On another note, the 2011 riots in England, which escalated following the death of a citizen shot by the police, have provided a setting for research, a setting based on a clashing relationship between the public and law enforcement. During this period of social unrest, social media could serve the government to monitor and measure tension (Williams et al., 2013). On Twitter, the population was highly critical towards the Metropolitan Police Service (London jurisdiction) and faintly supportive at the very beginning of the riots (Gasco, Bayerl, Deneff and Akhgar, 2017). This police department received more backlash than the other studied account (the Greater Manchester Police). This suggests that negative sentiments were not evenly distributed, which can be attributed to the death of the citizen which was perpetrated by the Metropolitan Police. The Black Lives Matter movement also provide yet another setting demonstrating this clashing relationship. Anti-police feelings have been observed online regarding tension around ethnicity during specific events (Clark, Bland and Livingston, 2017). Furthermore, certain categories of the population, such as ethnic minorities or those who do not fully trust the police, do not necessarily view social media as a tool for crime prevention (Israni, Erete and Smith, 2017). These studies demonstrate that real-life sentiments have implications on online relationships with the police as well as the view of such presence. In the last years,

the police have significantly increased its online presence by using social media, platforms that are used by a wide variety of the population

1.3. Cybercrime or cyber-incivility?

As the police are present on social media, they can be part of online conversations as well as be the targets of deviant behaviours. After providing an overview of cybercrime and cyberhate, legal aspects will be discussed in terms of insults to the police online.

Nowadays, the internet is part of the everyday life of millions of individuals. It is therefore without any surprise that deviant activity occurs in this setting. The internet provides a new mean for deviant but also criminal behaviour, which can sometimes overlap with traditional offline deviance (Peterson and Densley, 2017). As a result, policing in the 21st century has to face different challenges, including new types of crime (Hodgson, 2005). Cybercrime is indeed large and has a wide variety that includes, for instance, software piracy or credit card information stealing. It could also consist of other issues which may have heavy consequences on the lives of the perpetrators as well as potential victims. It is the case of the *fangirling* of terrorist organisations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (Ghajar-Khosravi, Kwantes, Derbetseva and Huey, 2016). However, there are some forms of behaviour that occur online, which could be encompassed under the cyberdeviance label (Holt, Bossley and Seigfried-Spellar, 2015), which is, in its turn, also comprised of a wide array of online incivilities.

Cyberhate is a relatively new social phenomenon and has arisen with the advent of the internet in places such as forums and social media (Williams and Pearson, 2016). It is defined as the spreading of hate through information or speech targeting specific groups (Anti-Defamation League, 2010). On Twitter, the categories of hate usually evolve around individual's race, behaviour (insecurities and sensitivity) as well as physical traits (such as obesity) (Silva, Mondal, Correa, Benevenuto and Weber, 2016). These types of content, which are highly antagonistic, may cause social tension (Burnap and Williams, 2016). Such behaviours can go as far as being involved in more globalised movements, such as white supremacy groups (Perry and Olsson, 2009; Douglas, McGarty, Bliuc and Lala, 2005). However, the prosecution

of hate speech is a difficult task and the police are often submerged by its quantity that exceeds their means and may be limited by the legislation in place (Banks, 2010; Bakalis, 2017). Also comprised in the cybercrime/cyberdeviant spectrum are online abuse and incivilities. Incivilities, which is characterised by rudeness and/or disrespectfulness are acts that can be experienced in day-to-day life. These acts can be, for instance, not giving up one's seat for someone who has priority or disrespect the authority between a pupil and a professor. They occur on a wide range and are often subjectively considered as disrespectful by the victim of such behaviour. These are also found online. Cyber-incivilities differ from regular cybercrime because they are not against the law. They however still have an impact on individuals.

There may be negative discourses directed at specific professions. It was the case during the Black Lives Matter movement as an anti-police movement was distinguished on social media, especially on Twitter during the 2015 pool party incident (a Texas police officer was filmed restraining an African-American teenager) (Clark, Bland and Livingston, 2017). A research conducted recently has looked at abuse on Twitter directed at Members of the Parliament in the United Kingdom before the general elections of 2015 and 2017 (Gorrell, Greenwood, Roberts, Maynard and Bontcheva, 2018). During the general election, future members were the targets of abuse in 3.6% and 4% of the tweets they received respectively in 2015 and 2017. They found that the main targets were mostly male, individuals identifying themselves as part of the conservative movement and were active on the social media. They also placed the focus on the other side of the table: that of the abuser. It was found that throwaway Twitter accounts were used when the abuse was directed at a limited number of Members of the Parliament. Furthermore, the abusive tweets concerned limited topics such as borders and terrorism. Twitter is a prolific scene for sarcasm and incivility, especially when it comes to political issues (Anderson and Huntington, 2017). For instance, Oz, Zheng and Chen (2017) studied incivility and impoliteness on Facebook and Twitter in order to compare their prevalence on the two social media. Interest was given to the White House Facebook page and Twitter account. They found that incivility and impoliteness were more present on Twitter. These types of online behaviours can be partly explained by the disinhibition effect the internet has, which, for instance, allows for a certain invisibility but allows the minimisation of statuses and authority (Suller, 2004), potentially leading to insults to the police.

As seen above, face-to-face police-public relationships may be caught in the middle of tensions. It is therefore not surprising that such quality of relations can be transposed online. This, therefore, can result in the police being the target of antagonistic online content. There are some complicated legal aspects that need to be taken into account when studying insults to police officers on social media. The first issue encountered is that of the jurisdiction of Twitter. Legal cooperation with foreign jurisdictions is not guaranteed as Twitter is based in the United States (Horsman, Ginty and Cranner, 2017). As a result, local laws have to be studied. In the United States, freedom of speech is regulated by the *First Amendment of the Constitution*. This right is allowed as long as it does not fall under the fighting words doctrine, in which insults are included (*Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*, 1942). Deviant behaviour toward police officers, for instance insults, have been regrouped under the ‘contempt of cop’ figure of speech in the country. In Canada, freedom of speech is regulated by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom* but is restricted to reasonable limits. The *Canadian Human Rights Act* prohibits discrimination against certain groups but professions are not explicitly cited as a legal ground for discrimination. The local human rights legislation that are in effect in provinces and territories may be more specific in their hate speech laws. The *Criminal Code of Canada* determines the criminal aspects of such offences. If the insults are targeting a specific officer who fears for their safety, then it could fall under criminal harassment (s.264 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*), which includes the practice of *doxing* (the disclosure of sensitive information about a specific individual, sometimes coming from the individual’s own social media accounts) as the case law has demonstrated (*R. v. B.L.A.*, 2015).

The insults, if they are threatening, could also fall under the uttering threats section (s.264.1 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*). There are some instances in which these uttering threats have happened on social media (see for instance: *R. v. Le Seelleur*, 2014). However, insults to police departments can be regarded as an offence under municipal legislation. For instance, such behaviour is illegal in the city of Granby, Quebec but the law has been extended to online settings, making it the first city in the province to ban online insults to officials (CBC News, 2015). However, it is not clear as to how the law can be enforced with the number of potential actors coming from around the world on social media while others question the legality of municipalities legislating on the internet (Proulx, 2015). Furthermore, the number of municipalities with such regulations is unknown to this date. The question concerning the

legality of insults to police officers on Twitter is difficult as it depends on local legislation while being inscribed in jurisdiction complexities at the same time. While insults to law enforcement agencies is condemned by a great proportion of the population, this deviant behaviour will be treated as cyber-incivility for the purpose of this research (even though sometimes it may meet the criteria for cybercrime).

Chapter 2. Problem Statement

The aim of the study is to provide an overview and to analyse the online communication that is sent to the police. More specifically, particular attention will be given to antagonistic content on the social media Twitter. Indeed, the relationship between the police and the public sets the foundation of the present research as academics have given a great deal of their time studying this peculiar relationship (e.g.: Norman, 2017). However, a great part of research is concentrated on what happens between the police and the public during face-to-face interactions. This literature insists on the presence of certain tensions between law enforcement and citizens, tensions which can either be punctual and systematic and are bound to the local culture. It would be interesting to see if similar mechanisms occur on the internet and if these tensions are transposed to online settings while at the same time being culturally relevant to the wider environment in which they occur.

Many academics have looked at the police' activities on social media (for example: Crump, 2011; Shneider, 2016). Their strategies for better communication have been dissected (e.g.: O'Connor, 2017) and the way they actually use it have been discussed (e.g.: Schneider, 2016). Much time has been devoted to what the police do on social media but few academics have researched how the public interacts with them. As the 21st century in developed countries revolve around modern technologies, it is important to understand that policing has evolved and has adapted itself to the society. While social media provide opportunities for communication, they are also the theater of online hate. As antagonism and insults occur online, it would not be surprising that the latters target law enforcement agencies. A recent study presented the results of an analysis of more than one million tweets received before the general elections in the United Kingdom in order to understand more about the abuse targeting Members of the Parliament (Gorrell, Greenwood, Roberts, Maynard and Bontcheva, 2018). They found that the main targets of online abuse amongst future elected members had specific characteristics based on gender, political views and frequency of activity on social media, which made them more likely to be targeted when compared to the others not fulfilling these characteristics. Specific characteristics were also found among the accounts showing abusive behaviour, specifically in terms of the age

of the account as there was evidence of usage of throwaway accounts for specific abusive targeting. Furthermore, abusive Twitter users tended to talk about different topics when compared to the general non-abusive population. While Members of the Parliament in the United Kingdom and the American and Canadian police are different entities, their positions in the public service, political engagement and visibility on social media can serve as a basis for a parallel in the online abuse that they receive. As such, the present research finds its inspirations in the study on Members of the Parliament (Gorrell, Greenwood, Roberts, Maynard and Bontcheva, 2018). It would be interesting to better understand the mechanisms behind the insults made to the police and see if specific characteristics can be extracted from the targets as well as the abusers, as it was the case for Members of the Parliament.

As such, one of the objectives of the study will be to provide an overview of the current situation in the United States and Canada in terms of the communication that is directed to the police on Twitter. The second objective will be to further explore this communication by studying the tension that can be found in these tweets. These types of research analysing online tensions targeting specific people or entities are scarce. It is area that demands more academic research (Huang, Huo, Yao and Chao, 2016). The present research will help fill this gap as, to our knowledge, no study has looked at antagonistic content sent to the police on the social media Twitter.

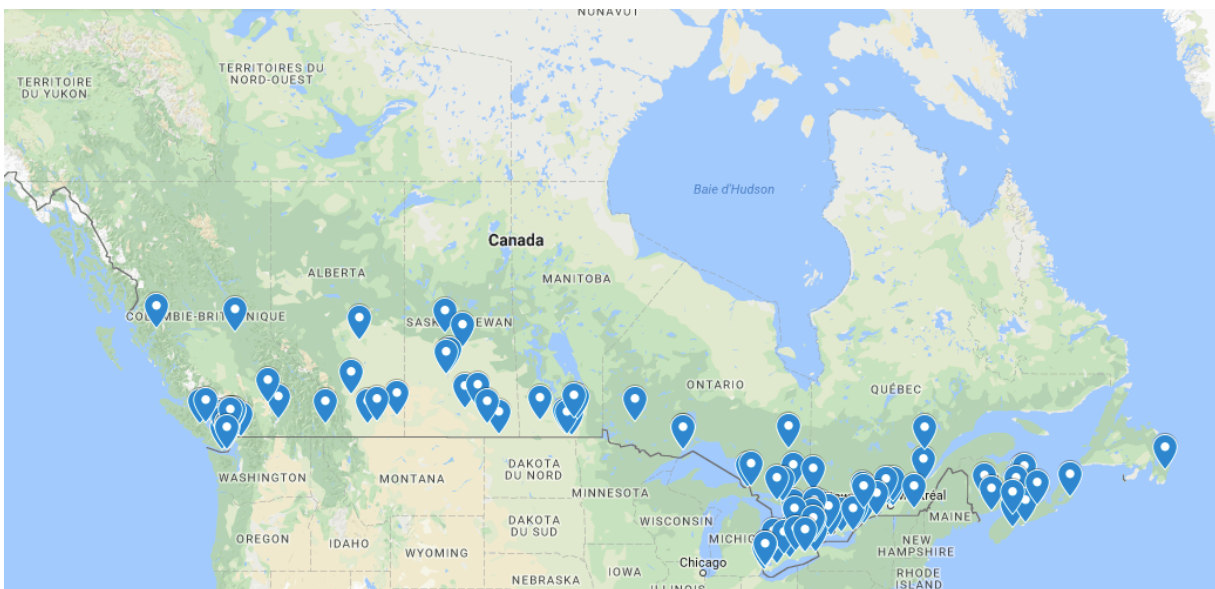
Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Data

In order to compare the tweets sent to the police, the countries at interest will be Canada and the United States. Due to differences in the number and repartition of the population on respective territories as well as discrepancies in the organisation of police services, two different methodologies have been adopted regarding the choice of studied Twitter accounts.

For Canada, a list of police services (“List of Law Enforcement Agencies in Canada”, n.d.) has been used in order to find as many Twitter accounts as possible. A total of 250 accounts have been selected. These include federal, provincial, municipal as well as specialised forces (e.g. canine units) and their geographical locations are visible from *Figure 1* (also see *Appendix A* for a list and *Appendix B* for a more detailed map of the covered territory).

Figure 1. Overview of the location of the studied accounts in Canada

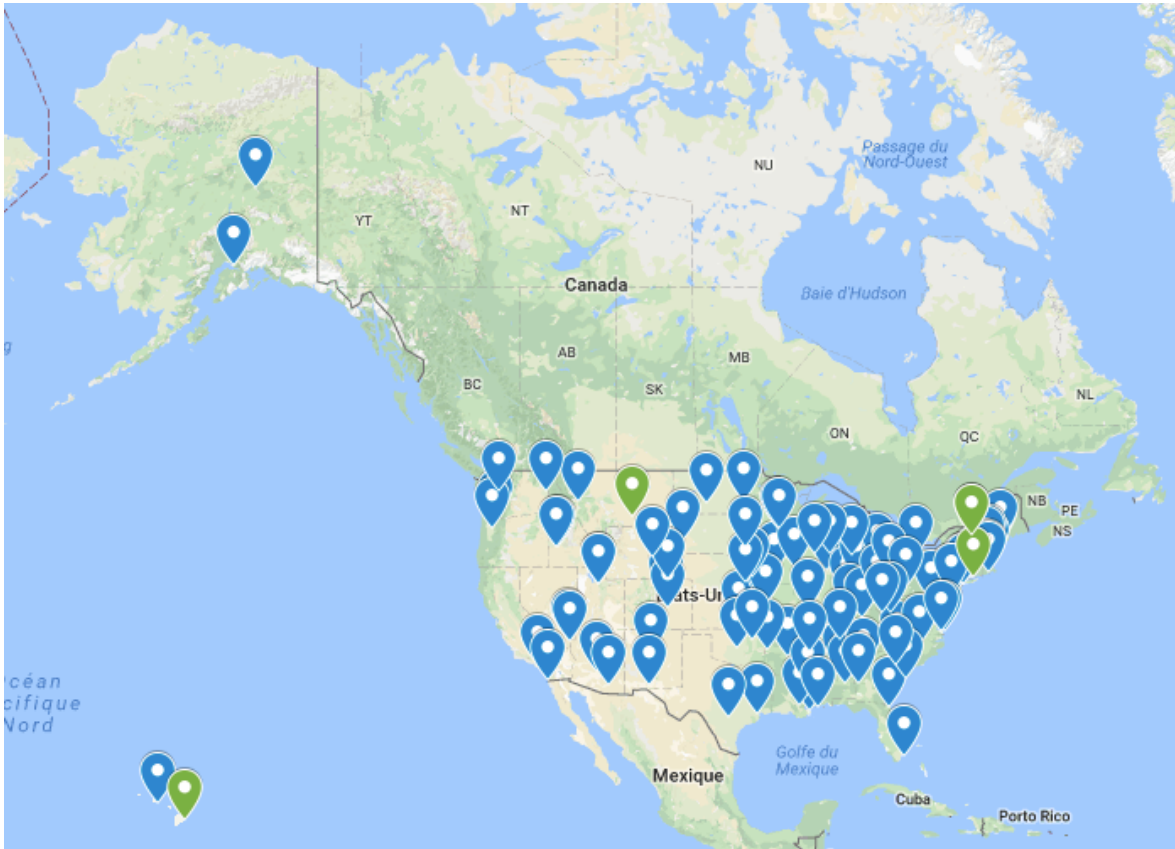


(Knop, 2018b)

As for the United States, the two most populous cities in each state have been identified and the corresponding police services have been searched on Twitter. A total of 96 accounts have been found as Billings (Montana), New Haven (Connecticut), Hilo (Hawaii) and Essex

(Vermont) (all in green on the map below on *Figure 2*) did not seem to have a police Twitter account at the time of writing (see *Appendix C* for a list and *Appendix D* for a more detailed map of the covered territory). After the lists of police departments at interest were identified, they were manually searched one by one using Twitter’s search options.

Figure 2. Overview of the location of the studied accounts in the United States



(Knop, 2018h)

The total number of monitored accounts is 346. However, the reliability of these accounts may vary. Not all of them are verified (indicated by a blue logo next the username) by Twitter services. This is relatively normal for small accounts but it is advised to operate with caution as some accounts may not be run by police’ communication departments. All things considered, an insult to the police, even mentioning an account that may not be legitimate, still targets the said police service. As a result, all the mentioned Twitter accounts were kept for the purpose of the analysis.

Table I contains the variables that were retrieved using Twitter’s Application Programming Interface (API; except for the sentiment analysis which was subsequently added, see 4.2. *Procedure*) and that were used for the analyses. The variables using temporal indications all relate to the time-zone of Montreal in Quebec, Canada (UTC-05:00 during winter time). The number of days on Twitter has been established on January 31st 2018. The variables using counts (followers, friends, favourites and statuses) are all retrieved at the time of the creation of the tweet for which they appear in the database. They can therefore vary with time. Some tweets were withheld in countries, meaning that legal demands have been filed asking to withhold the content of a tweet (Kessel, 2017). Lastly, favourites were recently changed for likes on Twitter (from a star to a heart-shaped button) so both denominations are used but they refer to the same option.

Table I. List of studied variables

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
<i>Created at</i>	Date of the creation of the account
<i>Number of days</i>	Number of days on Twitter
<i>Lang</i>	Language
<i>Source</i>	Device used to tweet
<i>Text</i>	Text in the tweet
<i>Withheld in countries</i>	Countries in which the tweet is withheld, if so
<i>Date and hour</i>	Date and time of the creation of the tweet
<i>Screen name</i>	Username @
<i>Name</i>	Name appearing on the account
<i>Followers count</i>	Number of accounts following this user
<i>Friends count</i>	Number of accounts followed by the user
<i>Favourites count</i>	Number of liked tweets by the user
<i>Statuses count</i>	Number of tweets by user
<i>Geo enabled</i>	Whether geolocalisation is activated
<i>Sentiment</i>	Sentiment analysis: positive, neutral, negative
<i>Accounts cited</i>	Police department(s) mentioned in the tweet
<i>Swearwords said</i>	Swearword(s) said in the tweet if the case

3.2. Procedure

The present research is longitudinal. Tweets have been retrieved using Twitter's Application Programming Interface (API) (Twitter, 2018d). It has been used in many studies involving Twitter data collection and has been recommended by researchers (e.g. Gupta, Kamra, Thakral, Aggarwal, Bhatti and Jain, 2018). The retrieval period goes from January 1st 2018 to January 31st 2018. The object of study is tension, particularly insults addressed to the police on Twitter when the latter are mentioned. This means that, for the tweets to be eligible, they had to be written during the said period of time and mention selected police accounts (also called 'tagging', using the @ function on Twitter). All retweets have been deleted from the databases as the data was too heavy for more efficient analyses as retweets do not represent new content as they are only repetitions of tweets.

Having chosen the Twitter accounts for this study, it was soon realised that using Twitter's API would present a certain challenge regarding data retrieval, storage and eventually analysis. All the tweets mentioning the selected police accounts were selected in the period of one month, which resulted in a total of 105 953 tweets. Finding the insulting tweets by hand would have been a time-consuming task. The strategy that was used was to select a few keywords representing insults beforehand and include them in the variables for data collection. The list of insults used for this research is provided in *Appendix E*. These insults were chosen as they were believed to be culturally appropriate in the chosen geographical areas. Insults and their derivatives in both English (36 in total) and French (32) were included as well as insults and slang that are specific to French-speaking Canadian provinces (e.g. Quebec) and which are not used as often in other French-speaking areas of the world.

Analyses have been made using the Jupyter Notebook (Jupyter, n.d.), a web application that allows you to explore data with the software Pandas (Pandas, n.d.) to help with data structure and visualisation, programmed in Python language. The polarity of tweets has been analysed using TextBlob's Sentiment Analyzers (TextBlob, n.d.). The polarity of tweets is scored based the words contained in the tweet thanks to a lexicon dictionary. The results vary between -1 and 1, which can subsequently be transformed in a categorical sentiment analysis: tweets can be considered negative (when the polarity is below 0), neutral (when it equals 0) or positive (when it is above 0). Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Office for Students 2016, Version

15.20) was used. Regular tables, pivot tables as well as graphs were generated using this software. It is also important to note that percentages were all rounded to the nearest tenth, which may account for totals not exactly equaling 100%.

The data was analysed on a quantitative basis but also a qualitative one. For the section on characteristics of tweets and users concerning antagonistic content (4.2.1), a separation will be made between the *general population* and the *swearing population*. The *general population* refers to the entirety of the accounts tweeting and mentioning police accounts while the *swearing population* use swearwords in their tweets mentioning the police. The split between the two populations allows to analyse their characteristics separately in order to better grasp the potential differences and resemblances between the two. The choice was made to report results from the top 10 users of both populations (meaning the ones appearing the most frequently in both populations). This choice was made as some variables had to be manually calculated (the number of days on Twitter) as well as checked on Twitter. Indeed, the top 10 users of both populations in both countries were looked for directly on Twitter. Their usernames were entered in Twitter's search bar and the content of their biography, when available, as well as their last tweets were analysed (in July 2018). Furthermore, due to large scopes of data (as will be outlined in the section 4.2.1), the average would not be representative of such data. The median was therefore used for more accurate representation.

All the tweets from the database containing the swearwords were analysed (section 4.2.3), which resulted in a total of 2 231 tweets (1547 for the United States and 684 for Canada). Such work was not automated. Each tweet was read in its entirety (including hashtags and Twitter accounts mentioned). Each tweet was subsequently coded according to the chosen variables (see *Table II*, next page). The number of mentioned accounts in the tweet and the variable 'mentioned accounts only police-run' allows to know how many accounts were mentioned in the tweet and if these accounts were part of list of studied police accounts. For instance, a tweet could be on the database as it mentions one of the studied police Twitter accounts but could also, at the same time, mention another person on Twitter who is not part of the police. The 'insulting tweet' variable separated the tweets that were insulting from those that were not and the variables 'insulting the police' and 'insulting other than the police' permitted to know the target of such insults, if it was the case. General themes were deduced from the text (variable 'general theme') before a more precise theme was extracted (variable 'extended

theme’). For instance, for the following imaginative tweet: ‘I do not understand Donald Trump’s decision on the Mexico-border wall’; the general theme of the tweet would be ‘politics’ while the extended themes would be ‘President’ and ‘immigration’. From time to time, the website Urban Dictionary (www.urbandictionary.com) was used in order to interpret slang in English and therefore better extract themes from the tweet.

Table II. List of variables used for the content analysis of tweets

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Type of variable</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<i>Number of mentioned accounts</i>	Continuous	1; 2; 3...
<i>Mentioned accounts only police-run</i>	Categorical	Yes; No.
<i>Insulting tweet</i>	Categorical	Yes; No.
<i>Insulting the police</i>	Categorical	Yes; No.
<i>Insulting other than the police</i>	Categorical	Yes; No.
<i>General theme</i>	Categorical	Politics; Police behaviour...
<i>Extended theme</i>	Categorical	Traffic; Racism...

3.3. Social Media Ethics

Consideration for ethical issues is an important part of the research process. However, when it comes to research in which data from social media is gathered, an academic consensus has yet to be reached (Webb et al., 2017). There exist three main interconnected issues: consent, anonymity and the avoidance of harm of participants. The seeking of consent on social media presents an ethical challenge in itself (Webb et al., 2017). Williams, Burnap and Sloan (2017) have published a study relevant to the present research as it concentrates on ethics on Twitter by taking into account participants’ points of view. They found that users usually expect for consent to be sought when the data they produced is utilised for a certain purpose. The researchers therefore pointed out that, even if using the data is not technically against Twitter’s Terms of Service (Twitter, 2017b), the ethical issues encountered in more traditional studies in social sciences should not be overlooked. As a result, Williams, Burnap and Sloan (2017) advice that permission should be asked beforehand when possible. However, the reality of this type of

research is understood, therefore, when consent cannot be sought, due fairness should be considered. It is particularly the case when additional data are being generated via the utilisation of algorithms to infer on gender or ethnicity for instance. No such algorithms will be used in the present research. Consent was not sought due to the lack of academic consensus on Twitter research as well as a lack of resources to do so with such a high number of tweets. However, the fairness of using such data has been heavily studied according to Twitter's Privacy Policy (The 2016 version was in place at the time; Twitter, 2017a). The latter specifies that public information can be shared third parties for, for instance, commercial purposes and that copies of the data may be kept by these parties as well as search engines.

The term 'third party' used here is blurry and seems to encompass a wide variety of actors that have the possibility to collect Twitter data. No information is available on the Twitter Help Center concerning the possibilities of academic research being made on Twitter. Twitter has several programs in which users can participate in order to improve their services (the Experiments Program, Twitter User Research, the Insiders Program; Twitter, 2018e; Twitter, 2018b; Twitter, 2018a; Twitter, 2018c). However, the only mention of academic research that can be found in the legal section concerns the Lumen research project whose database contains requests to remove content from the internet (Twitter, 2018f; Lumen, n.d.). While it is impossible for Twitter to list all the third parties that can use public data and in what ways, in the light of the Cambridge Analytica Facebook scandal, it may be interesting to have more detailed information about the different categories of parties that can use these data and to what end. However, the European law on data protection which came into effect on May 25th 2018 led Twitter to update their Terms of Use with clearer information, separating residents of the United States and the others (Twitter, 2018g). However, Twitter informs its users on their responsibilities in the sentence "You are what you tweet" (Twitter, 2017a). As a result, extra precautions have been taken into account as will demonstrate the following paragraph.

Anonymity and avoiding harm to participants are linked. The great majority of studied Twitter users expect a certain anonymity (Williams, Burnap and Sloan, 2017). Anonymity in research needs to be managed and academics can employ several strategies in order to preserve confidentiality (Wiles, Crow, Heath and Charles, 2008). However, these strategies need to be carefully thought. Zimmer (2010) takes the example of a study in which data from Facebook profiles was used. Not enough precautions were taken, which led to the potential subsequent

identification of participants. Similar situations may occur in the case of Twitter. Citing tweets, even anonymous, can lead to the original account simply by using search tools (Webb et al., 2017). Some users can interpret this online platform as personal and may not feel the public aspect of their tweets (Marwick and Boyd, 2010). To counteract these issues, careful precautions will be used in the present research: the data will be deleted after the analysis; the raw data will not be shared with a third party and examples of insulting tweets will not be included in this study as they may harm the users.

3.4. Limits of the Methodology

This study is not without its limitations. The lack of generalization is fourfold: geographical, temporal, fundamental and personal. Firstly, in terms of location, the present research is only concerned with a limited list of Twitter accounts that have been selected. Not all the police Twitter accounts active in the United States and in Canada are part of the study. For instance, the methodology used to select American accounts (i.e. selecting the two highest populous cities per state) entails that some big cities were rejected. It is the case of San Francisco (California) as it does not meet the criteria. Secondly, this study is not generalizable to other countries as well. The cultural aspect of insults, added to the discrepancies in the use of social media by the police as well as diverse quality of police-citizen relationships entail that results may be different in other areas of the world. On another level, it is also believed that the present study is not generalizable over time. The results could have been different based on the context, mediatisation and current tension. Thirdly, the use of Twitter to collect data implies that the results are only generalizable to this particular social media, in which the frequency of insults may vary from other social media such as Facebook. Some data may have been missed due to the concentration on certain insults. This also entails that we do not know exactly what else is said to the police on Twitter but also why this type of deviant discourse takes place. Furthermore, the focus on users is limited in its richness due to limited available reliable data, including the fact that several accounts could be the hideout of a single individual. Lastly, the lack of generalization may be personal to a certain extent. This is due to a possible subjectivity in the

analysis of the content of tweets. This problem is exacerbated as tweets taken out of their original context are subject to interpretation.

On another note, the utilisation of a list in order to retrieve insults is also limited. Firstly, only certain words were selected and, amongst these, could potentially be positive tweets. This is the case of the word *sh*t*, which could be used as follows: *This is the sh*t*; which would refer to a good thing but the possibilities of using these insults in joyful contexts are limited. However, some tweets appeared in the database because of this list but were not swearwords. Four instances were noticed and were therefore subsequently taken off the swearword database: the word *f*f*, and insult in Canadian French, appears in the English word *fifth*; the word *d*ck* is also a name: Dick; the insult *p*te* in French appears in the English word *dispute*; the insult *chr*ss* appeared in a few usernames; the insult in French *g*rce* appeared in the name of the current Mayor of Los Angeles Eric Garcetti. Secondly, the list of swearwords does not determine the target of the insult. Therefore, the police can be mentioned in a tweet without being the target of the swearwords (in responses to the police' tweets for instance). However, using a list appears crucial as it allows for the narrowing down of the number of tweets to manually analyse and pinpoints a great part of the antagonistic content.

Lastly, two main bugs were reported. Firstly, one tweet was repeated almost 30 000 times in a row in the database. These tweets were deleted from the database. Secondly, the tweet collection appeared to have stopped for a full day on January 9th 2018. The tweets are therefore missing from the data. This could potentially have had an effect on the data as, for instance, the total volumes of tweets reported in the results section (Chapter 4) are therefore not complete.

Chapter 4. Results

4.1. Overview

4.1.1. Characteristics of tweets and users

A total of 105 953 tweets comprised of 39 209 and 66 744 tweets respectively mentioning the selected police Twitter accounts in Canada and in the United States were retrieved. They were respectively tweeted by 16 571 and 34 408 different users, which equals to an average of 2.4 and 1.9 tweets per user.

Firstly, the proportions of tweets in certain languages (see *Table III*) differed depending on the country (in this section ‘country’ will not refer to the user’s country, as it unknown, but will refer to the country of the mentioned police account). While English appeared as the most used language in both databases, proportionally speaking, there were more tweets in English in Canada when compared to the United States. While the lower proportions of the use of French are not so surprising in the USA, Spanish tweets were also few (258; 0.4%). These statistics may be explained by the high number of tweets for which Twitter’s API did not recognise the language (11.2% in the USA). This may be due to the sole use of emojis, special characters, links or images.

Table III. Languages used in tweets

<u>Country</u>	<u>English</u>		<u>French</u>		<u>Not recognised</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Canada	35 631	90.6	912	2.3	2354	5.9
USA	57 941	86.8	159	0.2	7484	11.2

Secondly, users tweeted differently. They can tweet from diverse platforms. The six most used platforms in both countries are regrouped in *Table IV* (next page). The most used application in both countries is the iPhone Twitter application. This is not surprising considering the heavy establishment of Apple on the North American market. There are, however,

differences in the ranking as there were more tweets sent via the web (from a browser on the Twitter website) mentioning Canadian police departments than in the USA, where Android was more heavily used. There are two applications which appear in the ranking that were not expected: Tweetdeck and Twitter Lite. Tweetdeck (<https://tweetdeck.twitter.com>) is a dashboard application with a more visually complete overview of Twitter activities in one look. Twitter Lite works like an application but uses the mobile web version of Twitter and allows, amongst other advantages, for less data use (Twitter Lite, 2017; For more information, see: Gallagher, 2017).

Table IV. Most used platforms to tweet

<u>Application</u>	<u>Canada</u>		<u>United States</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>Rank</u>
iPhone	12 675	1	26 012	1
Web	9971	2	13 157	3
Android	9517	3	15 937	2
Tweetdeck	1668	4	1828	6
iPad	1630	5	1972	5
Twitter Lite	1497	6	3032	4

4.1.2. Most mentioned police departments

This section provides an overview of the most mentioned police Twitter accounts in both Canada and the United States. The top ten most mentioned Canadian police departments received 19 281 tweets in January, representing 49.2% of all tweets sent to the selected accounts in the country (*Figure 3*, next page). The Toronto Police Service (TPS; which here comprises two of its main Twitter accounts: @TorontoPolice and @TPSOperations) arrives at the top with a large margin with 9369 tweets for the sole month of January. This accounts for almost 24% of the whole Canadian database. Toronto is followed by other big cities: Vancouver (2495 tweets), Edmonton (1573) and Ottawa (1431). The Peel region (Mississauga and Brampton) arrives in 5th position, despite its geographically close location to the leader, Toronto. It is interesting to note that The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, being a federal agency, is the only police account

of the top ten ranking to not be a municipal police force (or grouped police forces for the Peel region). The 11th place is occupied by the first provincial agency of the ranking: Newfoundland, which is followed by another big city: Montreal.

Figure 3. Top ten most mentioned police departments in Canada

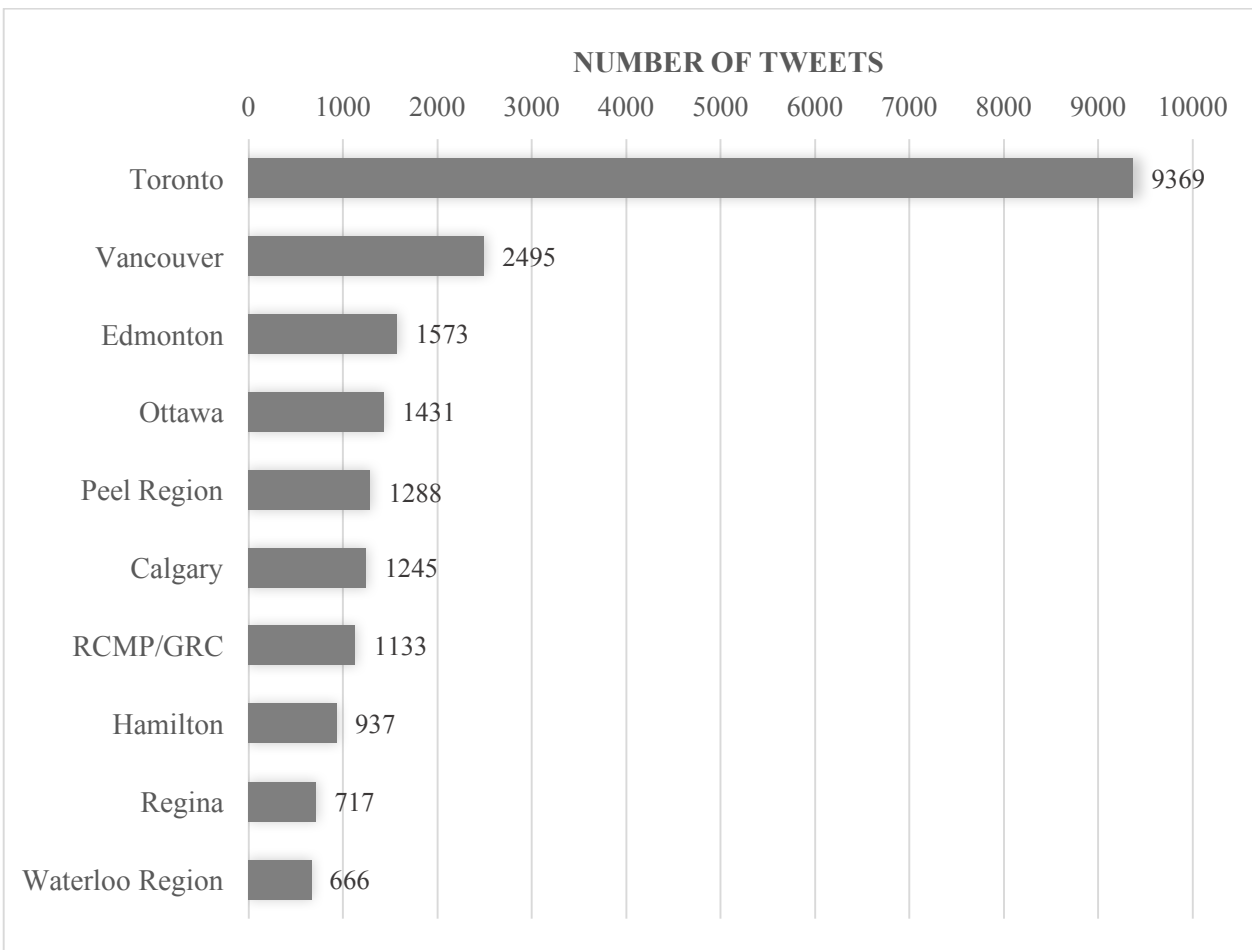
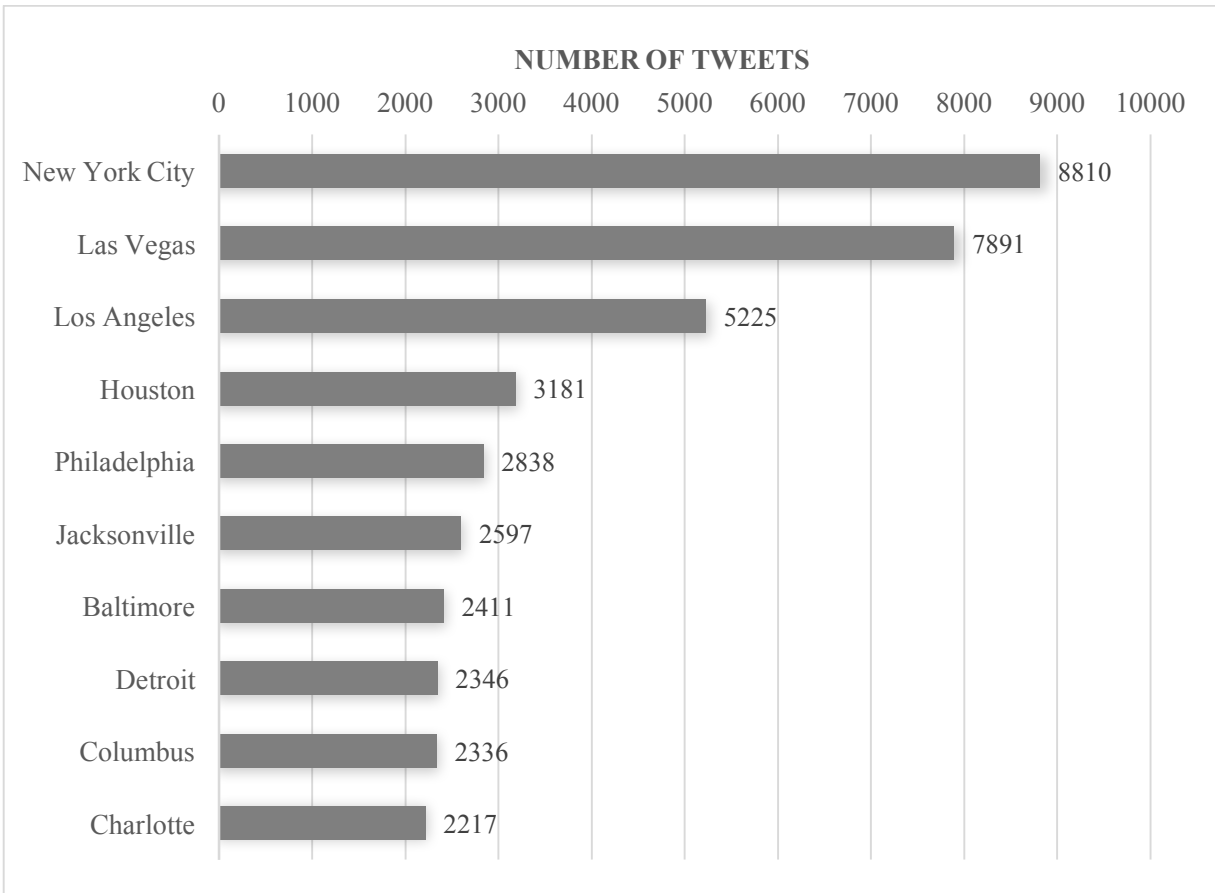


Figure 4 (next page) shows the results of the same analysis on the USA database. The top ten most mentioned police departments in the USA received a total of 39 852 tweets, which accounts for nearly 60% of all tweets sent to the selected police accounts.

Figure 4. Top ten most mentioned police department in the USA



The New York Police Department (NYPD) is the most mentioned police department in the United States with 8810 tweets in January, which amounts for 13.2% of all tweets. It is however closely followed by Las Vegas (7891 tweets). The top ten ranking continues as follows: Lincoln (11th; 1754 tweets), Louisville (12th; 1733), Portland (13th; 1333) and Chicago (14th; 1256).

Globally, it appears that the top 10 most mentioned police departments in the USA are tweeted at more (39 852 tweets) than the Canadian ones (19 281 tweets). Despite the discrepancy between these numbers, the TPS received more tweets (9369) than the NYPD (8810), which are both at the top of their respective lists. However, in Canada, Toronto arrives at the first position with a large margin while the amounts of tweets received by US accounts are closer together. Lastly, the diversification in the types of police forces found in the Canadian list (municipal and

federal) was not found in the USA but this is due to the methodology of choosing the most populous cities per state in the country.

4.2. Tension

4.2.1. Characteristics of tweets and users

Thousands of tweets mention the police every day. In the course of one month, the selected police accounts in Canada and the United States have been mentioned 105 953 times. However, this high frequency is not necessarily synonymous of a widespread satisfaction with law enforcement. The sentiment analysis algorithm, which uses the words present in the tweet in order to retrieve its polarity, was run through all the collected tweets. The results (*Table V*) show that the majority of tweets mentioning American and Canadian police accounts are neutral, followed by positive ones. However, respectively 15,3% and 17,4% of all tweets, which represent 17 041 tweets in total were negative. While it appears quite normal that the entirety of the conversation between the police and the population is not positive, more attention will be given to this antagonistic content, which can be a demonstration of a certain tension in the relationship between the police and citizens.

Table V. Sentiment analysis of tweets

<u>Country</u>	<u>Positive</u>		<u>Neutral</u>		<u>Negative</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Canada	12 553	31,9	19 915	50,6	6841	17,4
USA	18 390	27,5	38 146	57,1	10 200	15,3

As not all content is positive, it would be interesting to see if the characteristics of the users tweeting the police differ from those using swearwords while doing so. The use of swearwords and therefore potential insults can highlight tensions between the population and the police. As such, for the remaining of this section (4.2.1), a separation will be made between the *general population* (users tweeting and mentioning police accounts) and the *swearing population* (users tweeting swearwords while mentioning police accounts) (see 3.2 for more

details on the methodology). Both countries will be studied separately before comparing the results.

In Canada, out of the 39 309 tweets, 652 contained the selected swearwords, which amounts for 1.7% of the total number of tweets. Some tweets were withheld in countries. It was the case only in the Canadian database for 7 tweets: 6 were withheld in Denmark and one in France.

The results in the form of medians are comprised in *Table VI* for Canada. The number of friends and followers for the general population appear relatively elevated. This is partly due to two radio stations accounts diffusing local news, therefore mentioning police Twitter accounts quite often. The top 10 users of the general population appear to have more friends, followers and have usually been on the social media longer than the swearing ones. Another category in which the general population appears more active than the swearing users is in the total number of tweets. They tend to tweet more with a median of 6932 tweets than the swearing ones with a median of 1734. The only category in which the top 10 swearing users stand out is the number of favourites.

Table VI. Median characteristics of top 10 users in Canada

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Top 10 general</u>		<u>Top 10 swearing</u>	
	<u>Median</u>	<u>Scope</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Scope</u>
Tweets	6932	163 – 158 558	1734	28 – 82 648
Favourites	73,5	0 – 95 565	125	1 – 14 837
Followers	680	16 – 9005	78	0 – 1487
Friends	654,5	153 – 4526	147	4 – 967
Days on Twitter	748	18 – 2890	328	28 – 1307

In Canada, in the ten most frequent users in the general population, four accounts are currently suspended by Twitter (but were not suspended at the time of the tweet), two are the accounts of local radio stations, two accounts do not present any particular characteristics, one is an ex-police officer and one has been deleted (the corresponding user will be anonymized and called ‘Jason’). The top 10 most swearing users are quite different: only one account has been

suspended by Twitter but five have been deleted since their tweets. The last four accounts do not have particular characteristics of the sort but three of them stand out as they are separately involved in a criminal case (according to their tweets), very angry (according to their description) and retweeter of far right content. The user arriving at the top of the two lists is surprisingly the same: Jason. Before his accounts was deleted (either by Twitter or himself), Jason tweeted 323 times to the police in January, including 37 tweets with swearwords, which approximately represents ten tweets a day. In his tweets, Jason often mentioned the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), the Toronto Police Service (TPS) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Justin Trudeau’s Twitter account was also often mentioned in his tweets (even though this particular account is not in the list of monitored accounts of the present study). In his January tweets, Jason appeared to have limited topics of interests evolving around terrorism, religion, drugs (mainly methamphetamine) and sex. His speech is disorganised and, while the topic is easily extractable, the sentences do not make sense. This particular type of user appears to be exceptional and certainly do not resemble the majority of the database.

A similar analysis of median characteristics of the top 10 users in the general and swearing populations was done in the United States. The results are comprised in *Table VII*. In the United States, 1429 tweets contained swearwords, which represents 2.1% of the 66 744 tweets.

Table VII. Median characteristics of top 10 users in the USA

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Top 10 general</u>		<u>Top 10 swearing</u>	
	<u>Median</u>	<u>Scope</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Scope</u>
Tweets	12 183,5	220 – 300 312	9586	14 – 34 365
Favourites	748,5	0 – 41 024	1675,5	18 – 19 344
Followers	378,5	4 – 2040	309,5	2 – 1185
Friends	518	9 – 4853	482,5	13 – 1221
Days on Twitter	215,5	19 – 3096	1339	247 – 3288

The top ten swearing users appear to have more favourite tweets and to have been on the social media longer than the top 10 of the general, with quite large differences. However, the statistics concerning friends and followers and relatively close in both categories, with the

general population having slightly higher figures than the swearing ones. In terms of tweets, the top of the general population appears to tweet more than the most swearing ones.

In the general population, two accounts are related to law enforcement (one sheriff and one account regrouping law enforcement and fire agencies of a county), one is dedicated to giving city updates, one has no profile description and one mostly tweets about religion while another is interested in politics (mostly the 10th amendment).

In the list also appear two accounts that have been suspended by Twitter, one of which already appeared in the top ten general population in Canada. Two profiles were interesting as the first and the last of the top ten appeared to be connected. They had similar cover pictures and appeared to have the same interests: religion and politics. The username of one appeared in the link in the description of the other, which furthers the possibility of a link between the two. In the top ten swearword users, three did not have any particular information on their accounts, one claimed to be a writer, another a retired journalist and three were suspended. Two accounts had specific characteristics. The first claimed to be about child trafficking and corruption and gave an appearance of seriousness while still being a swearing user. The second was a self-proclaimed conservative and 2nd amendment believer while describing him/herself as a heavily drug user, which appears contradictory.

The medians of Twitter characteristics of the top 10 users in Canada and the United States differed. Globally, the figures were higher for the United States with the exception of the number of friends and followers. However, there were differences between the two countries in terms of the comparison between the general and swearing populations. Top users of the general population from both countries tended to have more followers, friends and tweets than the swearing population who had more favourites. However, the main difference between Canada and the United States lies in the discrepancy of the number of days since the creation of the account. In Canada, the general population tends to have older accounts than the swearing ones while it is the inverse in the USA.

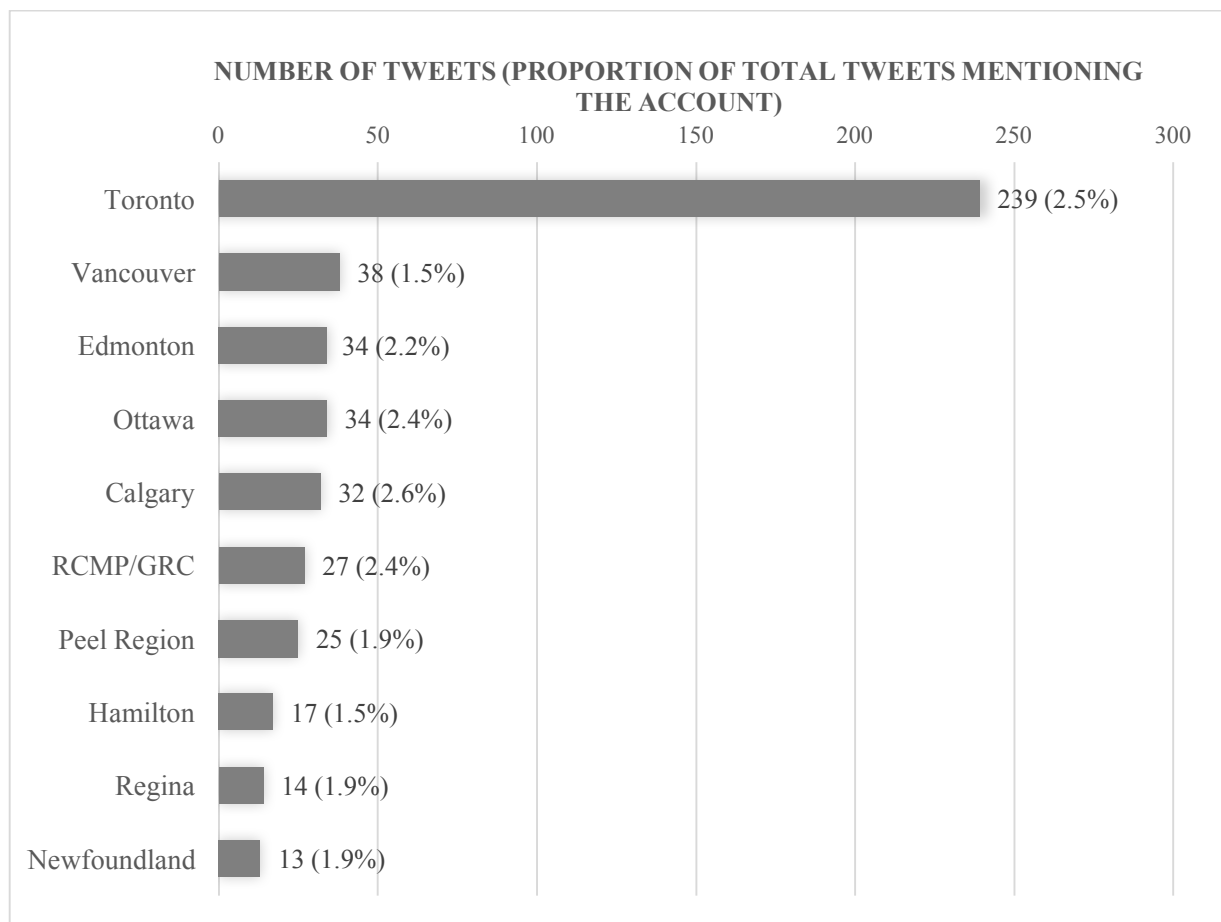
4.2.2. Most potentially insulted police accounts

As seen in section 4.1.2, there were differences in how frequently the different police departments were mentioned in tweets in the course of the month of January 2018. The

following section will provide similar data concentrating on the tweets with swearwords. These Twitter police accounts are named ‘potentially insulted’ because the use of a list of swearwords has limitations. These swearwords can be used in a positive manner and the insults can be targeted to other users while still mentioning police accounts (see 3.4 for more details on the limits of the methodology). These rankings allow to know if the most mentioned police accounts are also the most potentially insulted ones.

Figure 5 provides an overview of the most potentially insulted police departments in Canada. The percentages show the proportion of tweets with swearwords within the total of tweets mentioning the corresponding police account. For instance, the TPS was mentioned in 9369 tweets, amongst which 239 contained swearwords, which represents 2.5% of the tweets mentioning the TPS.

Figure 5. Top ten most potentially insulted police departments in Canada



The TPS is the most potentially insulted police department on Twitter in Canada in volume (239 tweets). However, in proportion to the communication they received, Calgary is the most potentially insulted in the first ten police departments (2.6%). This ranking in the volume of tweets is fairly close to the top ten mentioned police accounts in Canada (section 4.1.2) as Toronto was already at first place with an important difference. The only discrepancy between the top ten most mentioned and the top ten most potentially insulted is that the Waterloo region police department is not present in the latter ranking and has been replaced by Newfoundland.

Figure 6. Top ten most potentially insulted police departments in the USA

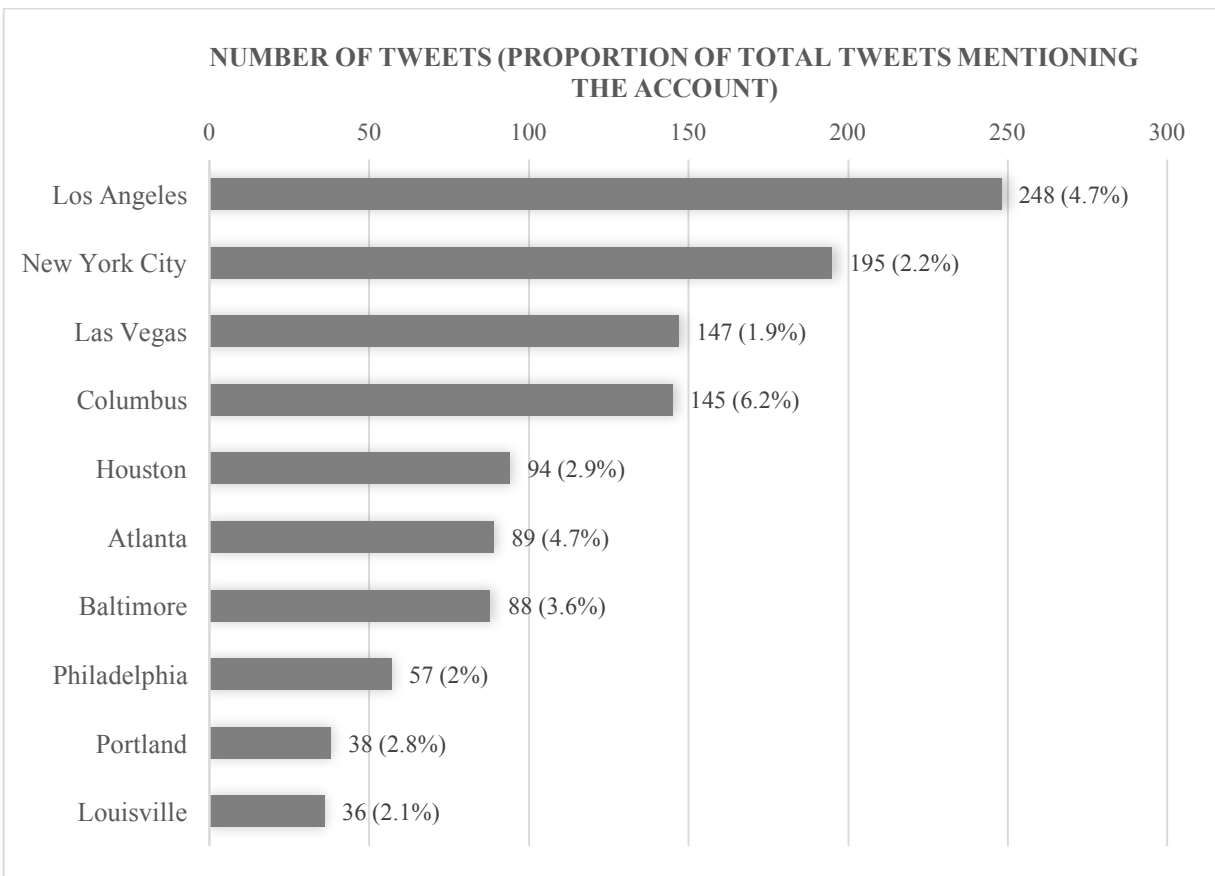


Figure 6 shows the results of the same analysis for the American police departments. Once again, the most insulted in volume, Los Angeles with 248 tweets, is not the one receiving the most potential insults proportionally speaking as it is Columbus (Ohio) with 6.2% of the

tweets mentioning them potentially insulting. This graph presents dissimilarities with the top ten most mentioned police accounts in the country. The LAPD is at the top of the list of the most potentially insulted police departments while the NYPD is the most mentioned one. Jacksonville, Detroit and Charlotte, which were amongst the most mentioned departments are not part of the top 10 most potentially insulted ones.

Once again, disparities between Canada and the United States are to be found here. There appears to be a more global repartition of potentially insulting tweets to the accounts in the USA compared to Canada, where it is highly focused on Toronto. However, the proportions of tweets with swearwords within all the tweets are lower in Canada than in the United States.

4.2.3. Content analysis of tweets

A content analysis of tweets with the selected swearwords was done in order to better understand what was said exactly to the police. The total of tweets analysed was: 2081 (652 for Canada and 1429 for the USA). Despite these tweets containing the listed swearwords, not all of them were insulting. In Canada, 72,8% of them were insulting (n=475) while it was the case of 66,4% of the tweets (n=949) mentioning American police accounts. Amongst these, respectively 26,8% (n=128) and 41% (n=392) were insulting the police in Canada and in the United States. Therefore, there appears to be already a difference between the two countries. While, proportionally speaking, there are more insulting tweets in the Canadian database, the police appear to be more likely to be the target of insults in the United States. All the targets are comprised in *Table VIII* (next page).

Firstly, tweets were insulting the police. While offenders are proportionally speaking the most insulted in Canada, it is not the case in the United States as the police appear as the preferred targets of these online insults. The reasons behind these insults, when they are any, are outlined further down in the current section (4.2.3) but these proportions show the presence of tension between the police and the population. Secondly, tweets insulting other targets than the police appear to mainly target offenders. By offender here, we mean in the eye of the user twitting who is often referring them as ‘criminals’. Such Twitter users often used a vocabulary evolving around idiocy in order to refer either to the offenders or their behaviours. They expressed their disgust towards their actions and called for harsh punishments while

congratulating the police for the arrest at the same time. Thirdly, tweets targeted other persons on Twitter. When people reply to police’ tweets, the police are mentioned in the tweet as well as the others they reply to. When the tweets are insulting other persons on Twitter, the police are mentioned and therefore lost in the conversation.

Table VIII. Targets in insulting tweets

<u>Target of the Insult(s)</u>	<u>Canada</u>		<u>United States</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Police	128	26,8	392	41
Offender	228	47,7	290	30,4
Other person on Twitter	88	18,4	153	16
Celebrity or politician	13	2,7	42	4,4
Other	14	2,9	42	4,4
Undetermined	8	1,7	27	2,8

Fourthly, insults were made to celebrities or politicians. In Canada, these tweets targeted Justin Trudeau, mainly for his incompetence (according to the users) as well as one targeting Donald Trump acknowledging the difference of politics in the two countries. The results in the US were more diversified. Once again, Trump was insulted. It was also the case of other persons in positions of power: Mayors (mainly of Chicago and New York), District Attorneys and Commissioners. One tweet even congratulated the NYPD while at the same time insulted the local Mayor. The only celebrity who was insulted and who was without any official political involvement was Alyssa Milano. Her liberal views as well as her female attributes were the targets of these tweets. Amongst the tweets insulting celebrities and politicians, this was the only occurrence of insults to femininity. Fourthly, other persons, entities, groups or things were insulted in margin. In Canada, Twitter users insulted the criminal justice system in its entirety, the country itself as well as parts or communities of the population: women, people with dark skin, Muslims and homosexuals. In the United States, insults targeted geographical locations: specific cities, states and countries; animals, TV shows and religion. Lastly, the target of the insults could not be determined from the tweet itself in several cases as the entire thread was not available for the analyses.

The two databases from Canada and the United States followed the same tendencies in the number of Twitter accounts that were mentioned in each tweet. While the condition for the tweets to appear in the database was to mention one police accounts, this does not mean that all mentions corresponded to police departments. Indeed, respectively 33,4% and 32,75% only mentioned the police in their tweets in Canada and the United States. The majority of tweets, roughly 60% for both countries, mentioned one or two Twitter accounts.

Table IX regroups the proportions of the main themes retrieved from the tweets with swearwords. In several cases, the tweet did not allow for the comprehension of context (102 tweets for Canada and 194 for the USA) because, once again, the thread was not available for the analyses. Both countries follow the same tendencies but there are some discrepancies in the repartition of the themes of the tweets.

Table IX. General themes of tweets with swearwords

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>United States</u>
<u>Theme</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Specific case	53,4	41,3
Police behaviour	20,5	27,3
Just insult	20,2	20,5
Politics	4,2	7,1
Local news	1,6	3,8

The two countries have the same tendencies as a great proportion of tweets with swearwords talk about specific cases. However, less tweets mentioning Canadian police departments talked about cases and more tweets talked about police behaviour when compared to the ones mentioning the American police. Comparable proportions of tweets with swearwords comprised of just insults were found in both countries. All these tweets can potentially reveal underlying tensions between the population and the police.

More specific themes were withdrawn from these tweets. As mentioned in the methodology, no tweet can be quoted due to ethical reasons (see 3.3), the themes will therefore be described. Firstly, tweets with swearwords related to specific cases. In Canada, the main great

concern was traffic, more specifically, traffic in the winter. There were complains made to the police directly or under police posts on the lack of capacity of some citizens to drive in heavy snow conditions as well as how they prepared their cars for such weather and their potential dangerousness (complains about people not taking off the snow of their roofs or not cleaning their headlights). These concerns are explained by the tweet retrieval period, which was winter. No such heavy concern was found in the US database about winter traffic. However, traffic in general, especially construction works, was of concern in the country. Tweets also mentioned cases about animals. In Canada, more specifically, users talked about cruelty as well as local laws (such as the pit-bull ban in Montreal). In the USA, the concern revolved around animal cruelty. Specific cases about drugs appeared in the Canadian database, especially marijuana but also other drugs which were considered as lethal, but not in the American one. Some Canadian police departments were mentioned in tweets which considered specific hate crimes as fake ones. Further tensions were found in the United States. The first mentions of racism were found in this section, more specifically, in how the police handle their work with users asking if treatment of a suspect would have been different had the skin colour not been the same. Instances of violence were also found as an outlying user called for the killing of an offender without trial or care.

Secondly, tweets concerned police behaviour. While there were a few congratulations in both countries, many tweets were calls for the police to do their jobs. Some of their work is considered wrong and not centered enough on the victims' wellbeing. Accountability was also of great concern. Citizens witnessing immoral acts made by the police and not being reprimanded were reported. It is a case of an officer who parked in an accessible spot in the United States. The use of resources has to be ameliorated according to the population on both sides of the border. In the United States, body cameras were considered as either useless as there were still police killing or not up-to-date. In both countries, the use of taxpayers' money was at the heart of the conversation on police' use of resources. While there were mentions of racism in Canada, more tweets were found in the USA database. People had concerns about their safety as dark-skinned citizens about unlawful arrest, bad treatment and killings. Calls were made against violence as well as for better training of American police officers.

Thirdly, tweets concerned politics. Users mainly twitted about their local political news. Tweets mentioning Canadian police forces talking about Justin Trudeau and the ones mentioning American police departments talking about Donald Trump and local mayors were found. These results are not surprising. Lastly, local news not involving politics also appeared as a topic of interest. In Canada, the gay pride as well as the sports team the Toronto Maps leafs were of great concern. On the other side of the border, both themes also appeared, more specifically, the Superbowl. Further themes were outlined from the tweets in the USA as people mentioned the work of sex workers, rejected injection sites and complained about the opening of school during cold weather.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The objective of the present research was to explore what is told to the Canadian and American police departments on the social media Twitter. To our knowledge, this is the first study that has analysed this issue. Therefore, many results are new and, while they can be placed within the larger related literature, they cannot be systematically compared.

Firstly, an overview of characteristics of tweets and users was provided. The results showed that the public is widely engaged in the communications made by police departments as thousands of users tweet to them every month. The characteristics of the languages and used applications show that the population of users is not homogenous. While the sentiment analysis ran on tweets mentioning the police concluded that the majority of the communication is neutral, negative tweets were less numerous than the positive ones. The latter were slightly more elevated in Canada (31,9% of all tweets) than in the United States (27,5%). This suggests a certain enthusiasm coming from the public. As mentioned in the literature review, discrepancies were also to be found in the two countries as the confidence rate in the police was higher in Canada (76%; Cotter, 2015) than in the United States (57%; Norman, 2017). Here, the proportions of positive tweets and police satisfaction cannot be directly linked together as no study, to our knowledge, has yet explored the impact of online police behaviour on the relationship between the public and the police. Another example of public engagement with the police lies in the mentions of police departments. Toronto was the most mentioned police department on Twitter in Canada. This result is not surprising considering that the TPS is the most active Twitter account in police force in the country (Schneider, 2016). In the United States, the results were not as clearly cut as New York City and Las Vegas were at the top. While the results for the NYPD were expected, it was not the case of the Las Vegas police department. It was predicted that citizens would be more likely to interact with their local police forces as they are more susceptible to have previously engaged with them or will do in the future. But the results showing that the Las Vegas police department was more mentioned than the LAPD despite Los Angeles being more populous did not confirm that prediction. However, the city being a very particular one filled with entertainment can have a certain floating population. The temporal proximity of the Las Vegas shooting that occurred in October 2017 and the

updates given by the department in the following months could be an explanation. Nevertheless, Twitter users do not have to be from the jurisdiction to tweet.

Secondly, tension was analysed amongst the tweets. The characteristics of these tweets and users were explored. Tension was firstly seen in the proportions of negative tweets in the Canadian and American database: respectively 17,4% and 15,3% of tweets. Once again, discrepancies were found amongst the two countries as, proportionally speaking, there were more tweets containing swearwords in the United States (2.1%) than in Canada (1.7%). The same conclusions were drawn from the ranking of the first ten most insulted police departments in both countries. The United States were more insulted both in volume and proportionally to the tweets they received. Once again, we are confronted to the lack of literature in the domain, limiting the possible comparisons. Statistics can be examined next to the study analysing the online abuse received by Members of the Parliament on Twitter (Gorrell, Greenwood, Roberts, Maynard and Bontcheva, 2018). During the general election, future members were the targets of abuse in 3.6% and 4% of the tweets they received respectively in 2015 and 2017. In average, the ten most potentially insulted police departments in the United States received 3.3% of tweets with swearwords, with proportions that went as high as 6.2% for Columbus. It appears that the proportions of antagonistic content in the study concerning Members of the Parliament and the present one are comparable. From the results of the present research, it appears that police departments with heavy online presence are the subject to many insults. Participation in social media, while being a great communication tool can also create a negative space in the margin where users express their dissatisfaction in, sometimes, insulting ways.

Tension was further explored with an analysis of all tweets containing swearwords. The results showed discrepancies between the two countries. In Canada, 72,8% of tweets with swearwords were insulting but only 26,8% of them targeted the police. In the USA, out of the 66,4% of tweets with swearwords, 41% insulted the police. These discrepancies may be the result of cultural differences but also dissimilar police-population relationships and, therefore, may be synonymous of less expressed online tensions. The results also showed that many tweets were insulting and mentioned police departments but did not target the latter. As responses to tweets and sub-responses contains the username of the account that posted the original tweet (e.g.: the NYPD), the police are lost in the conversation of other users who, from time to time,

insult each others. However, tensions were not only directed toward Twitter users. The punctual as well as the systematic tensions that impacted on the relationship between the police and the public were found in the content of antagonistic tweets. Concern with traffic in general as well as tickets, especially mentioning Canadian police departments, appeared as one of the most talked about punctual tension. As negative encounters have more impact on police confidence than positive ones (Skogan, 2006), it is not surprising that traffic, being a negative subject with its waiting times, road closures, road conditions and other tickets, recurrently appears in insulting tweets. The theme of systematic tension also developed in antagonistic tweets mentioning the police. Tweets requesting the police to do their job as well as abuse of power showed frictions in the police-public relationship. These are not surprising as they relate to the perceived application of fairness in their tasks which impact on feelings of police legitimacy from the public (Tyler, 1990). Furthermore, police behaviour was once again criticised in terms of occurrences of racism, mainly in the United States. This particular issues severely impact the relationship of the public and the police (Delpuech, Ross and Bonner, 2017) and is often mediatised in the country. While there is sometimes context within the insults sent to the police, at times, law enforcement agencies are insulted directly for what they represent: the authority and the government at large.

While the public is engaged on Twitter with the police, there appears to be a minority of users who express their dissatisfaction in police behaviour with the mean of insulting tweets. The latters reveal tensions, both punctual and systematic, that are already present in offline settings and which are to be understood within the wider local culture.

Conclusion

The relationship between the police and the public is not always positive and is bound to citizen's experiences of the police (Skogan, 2005). The police aim at ameliorating this relationship, or at least the communication to the public, with community policing strategies such as an online presence on social media (Greene, 2000). Police departments are more and more present on Twitter. However, as cyber-incivilities and deviance grow, the platform does not make the exception to the rule. Antagonistic content targeting the police is therefore found on this social media. The aim of the study was to provide an overview of insults made to police departments on the social media Twitter. Tweets sent to police forces in Canada and in the United States were collected over the course of January 2018. The analyses firstly provided an overview of the characteristics of users and tweets received by the police as well as how often the public mentions these police accounts on Twitter. Secondly, much attention was given to tension. Many tweets containing swearwords were retrieved from the database. These were subsequently analysed in terms of characteristics of users and tweets as well as police mentions. Subsequently, an analysis of the content of antagonistic tweets was done in order to understand more the subjects talked about as well as claims. While cases were the main interest of these users, police behaviour was a major concern amongst Twitter users. These types of tweets revealed some differences as they related to local punctual and systematic tensions.

The present research has real world applications. Police departments may want to be hear what citizens have to say online. As we have seen, the population is well engaged on Twitter and, even though the police may be lost in the conversation between other users, attention should be given to the discussed topics. They can reveal certain tensions, whether punctual or systematic, and issues that particular police department needs to work on in order to ameliorate police-public relationship. For instance, if a particular police force is often accused of racism online, the critics can lead to the implementation of diversity training or activities in neighbourhoods with high proportions of ethnic minority population in a community policing approach. These results can also help police departments in their use of resources. As there appears to be peaks of tweets during newsworthy local news involving the said department,

online teams could be reinforced during these times for moderation activities as well as public partnerships in order, for instance, to retrieve more information about specific cases.

While there are already possible law enforcement applications to this study, more research is needed. Firstly, as it was only focussed on a particular month, it would be interesting to replicate the same analyses over the course of one year in order to detect fluctuations. Secondly, a geographical expansion of study would provide a more in-depth understanding of cultural differences. The studied countries, Canada and the United States, are fairly close in terms of culture, even though we have seen some differences in tensions involved in policing. Other countries, in which the relationship with the police is quite different (e.g. Norway), should provide contrasting results. Thirdly, analyses need to be pushed further. For future research, the creation of an index is proposed in order to conduct bivariate analyses. This index, created for police Twitter accounts, could potentially include the number of followers, the number of tweets, the number of days since the creation of the accounts and the total number of people in the jurisdiction. As we have seen, big cities in both countries arrive at the top of the most mentioned police accounts. These results could be compared to those of smaller departments in order to better understand if the volumes of tweets depend, for instance, on the number of people in the jurisdiction or the frequency of tweets coming from the police. Lastly, attention should also be given to the reaction of the police subsequent to online insults. It would be interesting to look at departments' policies whether actions are taken (via Twitter for instance) when they are insulted or if there is a certain reliance on non-deviant users to report these types of behaviours. Research possibilities are wide as the subject of how the public responds to the police' online presence is unexplored.

Integration of criminalistics

This research, which appears at first glance as strictly criminological, does not merely stay within the boundaries of this discipline. This inductive study had two objectives corresponding to the steps of Scanning and Analysis in Eck and Spelman's (1987) SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment). Firstly, the purpose was to determine the existence of a deviant activity in the tweets addressed to the police, externalising and operationalised here in insults. This was achieved by *scanning* Twitter. Secondly, the study aimed at evaluating the current state of the situation by analysing the expression of this criminality in order to develop the current knowledge and literature on the phenomenon (Rossy and Mulone, 2015). As highlighted in the literature review and the problematic, the previous literature has not been concentrated on this particular issue, making it one of the studies of its kind. The establishment of frequencies and proportions of occurrence of these deviant acts that are the insults to the police permitted an *analysis* of the situation.

This manifestation of a deviant problem is regrouped in the content of the tweet (the insult). However, the tweet itself can also be considered as a digital trace of the action of a delinquent. The trace studied here, the tweet, except if left without the account holder's knowledge, is voluntary (contrary to other types of traces such as the IP address). This voluntary aspect therefore implies that it cannot exactly be classified as a trace as the latter has several characteristics, within which the lack of intent to leave it (Margot, 2014). As a result, a separation has to be made between trace and crime here. In the case of insults, the deviance is contained in the tweet as it represents the person's thought and the tweet itself is the trace of the action, while at the same time, it is the online posting of this particular thought that is problematic and deviant. Deviance and trace, content and container here are therefore slightly mixed. Furthermore, the distinction between words and traces as described by Cusson and Ribaux (2015) does not apply here. Words, in this case, do not aim to inform on criminal matters but rather are the problem in itself. Despite the shortness of tweets, one can already find how criminology and criminalistics are interconnected in 280 characters.

The separation between these two academic fields is even more blurry when it comes to the study of online criminal activity (Delémont, Esseiva, Been and Benaglia, 2014). Cybercrime is diverse and the comprehension of the distribution of this phenomenon requires criminology

in order to determine the parameters most favourable to the generation of traces (Rossy, Décary-Héту, Delémont and Mulone, 2018). It is possible that a higher quantity of tweets with deviant content appears during heavily publicised matters (of corruption for instance) or targeting popular police accounts as visibility plays a certain role in cybercrime (Leukfeldt and Yar, 2016). On the one hand, the knowledge of these mechanisms, which can be fluid, can feed cyber-criminological research, which has to be constantly updated. On the other hand, this knowledge could direct a certain orientation in the search for traces. For instance, if the most popular accounts are the most sought by deviant activity, it is fairly simple to target the tweets at issue by a rapid search directly on Twitter, without any prior collection. Similarly, the detection of patterns could reinforce policing proactive activities. For example, if there is an increase in deviant tweets during publicised matters involving a particular police service, this service could expect a certain flow of cyberdeviance and/or cyber-incivility that is higher than the regular level.

The existence and evaluation of the deviant problem at issue have impacts on the physical world. The work of police officers is already difficult. The officers managing Twitter accounts could decide not to do anything about these insults by lack of time or interest. Nevertheless, when police departments decide to take measures, forensic science becomes essential in the process of a judicial inquiry. The determination of identity is vital in the decision-making process at different levels: during the investigation, prosecution and trial (Casey and Jaquet-Chiffelle, 2017). Despite the use of digital traces such as the email address corresponding to the Twitter account or the IP address, the identification is obstructed by constraints that are present in the virtual world at large, not only on Twitter. The virtual identity is complex and can be changed deliberately (for instance, a person who has several accounts) or not (in the cases of impersonation or hack) (Koops, Leenes, Meintes, van der Meulen and Jaquet-Chiffelle, 2009). Identifying a person for investigative and prosecutorial purposes is not an easy task. As a result, it is crucial to join the forces of forensic science and more traditional police work in order to respond to the problematic (Casey and Jaquet-Chiffelle, 2017).

Joining the perspectives of criminology and forensic science could play a crucial role in answering criminal issues (Weyermann, Jendly and Rossy, 2018). Therefore, to scan and analyse the problem, to distinguish deviant activity and its traces, to determine cyberdeviant

mechanisms as well as identity, knowledge from both criminology and criminalistics is required to counteract the deviant problem that are tweets insulting the police.

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Appendix A. List of studied Twitter accounts in Canada

All Provinces

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP/GRC)	@rcmpgrecpolice
RCMP Depot Division	@RCMPDepot, @GRCDepot
RCMP National Division	@RCMP_Nat_Div, @GRC_Div_nat
Canada Border Services Agency	@CanBorder, @FrontiereCan
Correctional Service	@CSC_SCC_en, @SCC_CSC_fr

Prairie, Atlantic, Pacific

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
Canada Border Services Agency Prairie	@CanBorderPRA, @FrontiereCanPRA
Canada Border Services Agency Atlantic Region	@CanBorderATL, @FrontiereCanATL
Canada Border Services Agency Pacific Region	@CanBorderPAC, @FrontiereCanPAC

Alberta

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Alberta	@RCMPAlberta, @GRCAAlberta
Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team	@ALERT_AB
Alberta Sheriff(s)	@AlbertaSheriffs
Calgary Police Service	@CalgaryPolice
Edmonton Police Service	@edmontonpolice
Edmonton Police Service's patrol support helicopter	@EPS_Air 1
Edmonton Police Service Crime Prevention Unit	@EPSCrimePrev
Edmonton Police Commission	@YEG_Commission
Edmonton Police Service Recruiting Unit	@JoinEPS
Lethbridge Police Service	@lethpolice
Medicine Hat Police Service	@medhatpolice
Medicine Hat Police Service Bylaw Enforcement	@MHPSBylaw
Medicine Hat Police Service Canine Unit	@MHPSK9Team
Medicine Hat Police Service Traffic Unit	@MHPSTraffic
Taber Police Service	@TaberPoliceServ

British Columbia

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Van Island BC	@VanIslandRCMP, @GRCIledeVan
RCMP Langley BC	@LangleyRCMP
RCMP Kelowna BC	@KelownaRCMP, @GRCdeKelowna
RCMP Kamloops BC	@KamloopsRCMP, @GRCdeKamloops
RCMP Burnaby BC	@BurnabyRCMP
RCMP Nanaimo BC	@NanaimoRCMP, @GRCdeNanaimo
RCMP University Endowment Lands BC	@University_RCMP
RCMP Kimberley BC	@KimberleyRCMP
RCMP West shore BC	@WestshoreRCMP
RCMP White Rock BC	@WhiteRockRCMP
RCMP Sooke BC	@SookeRCMP
RCMP Kitimat BC	@kitimatrcmp
RCMP North Cowichan Duncan BC	@N_CowichanRCMP
RCMP Comox Valley BC	@comoxvalleyrcmp, @GRCvalleecomox
RCMP Prince George BC	@PG_RCMP, @GRC_PG
RCMP Sidney and North Saanich	@SidneyRCMP
Abbotsford Police Service	@AbbyPoliceDept
British Columbia Sheriff Service	@BCSheriffs
Delta Police Service	@deltapolice
Delta Police Service Recruitment and Training Section	@joindpd
New Westminster Police Service	@NewWestPD
Oak Bay Police Department	@OakBayPolice
Port Moody Police Department	@PortMoodyPD
Port Moody Police Department Community Action Team	@PMPDcat
Saanich Police Department	@SaanichPolice
Central Saanich Police Service	@cspoliceservice
Saanich Police Department Reserve Program	@SaanichPD_RCsts
Saanich Police Department Community Engagement Division	@SaanichPDclssgt
Saanich Police Department Traffic Safety Unit	@SPD_Traffic
Saanich Police Department Patrol	@SaanichPDPatrol
Saanich Police Department Youth and Schools Section	@SaanichPDSchool
Saanich Police Department Bike Section	@SaanichPDbikes
Saanich Police Department Canine Unit	@SaanichPDK9
Vancouver Police Department	@VancouverPD
Vancouver Police Board	@VanPoliceBoard
Transit Police British Columbia	@TransitPolice
West Vancouver Police Department	@WestVanPolice

Victoria Police Department
Victoria Police Department Canine Unit

@vicpdcanada
@VicPDK9

Quebec

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Quebec	@rcmpqc, @grcqc
Canada Border Services Agency Quebec	@CanBorderQUE, @FrontiereCanQUE
Sûreté du Québec	@sureteduquebec
Sûreté du Québec District Nord	@SureteNord
Sûreté du Québec District Est	@SureteEst
Sûreté du Québec District Sud	@SureteSud
Sûreté du Québec District Ouest	@sureteouest
Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal	@SPVM
Service de Police de la Ville de Québec	@SPVQ_police
Service de Police de la Ville de Gatineau	@PoliceGatineau
Service de Police de la Ville de Laval	@policelaval
Service de Police de l'Agglomération de Longueuil	@PoliceSPAL
Service de Police de la Ville de Blainville	@BLVpolice
Service de Police de la MRC des Collines-de- l'Outaouais	@Police_MRC
Service de Sécurité Publique de la Ville de Repentigny	@PoliceRPY
Service de Sécurité Publique de Saguenay	@SPVSaguenay
Sécurité Publique de la Ville de Sherbrooke	@SPSSherbrooke
Service de police de la ville de Saint-Jérôme	@spvsj

Saskatchewan

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Saskatchewan	@RCMPSK, @GRCSask
RCMP Big Rive SK	@RCMPBigRiver
RCMP Onion Lak SK	@RCMPOnionLake
Estevan Police Service	@Estevan_Police
Moose Jaw Police Service	@MLPolice
Prince Albert Police Service	@PAPOLICEca
Prince Albert Police Service School Liaison	@paSchoolLiaison
Regina Police Service	@reginapolice
Regina Police Service Recruitment Unit	@rpsrecruiter
Regina Police Service Recruitment Unit Civilians	@RPSCivilianJobs
Saskatoon Police Service	@SaskatoonPolice

Vanscoy Police Service
Weyburn Police Service

@vanscoyrmpolice
@WeyburnPolice

Manitoba

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Manitoba	@rcmpmb, @GRCManitoba
Altona Police Service	@AltonaPolice
Brandon Police Service	@BrandonPolice
Brandon Police Service School Resource Officers	@bpsro
Morden Police Service	@MordenPolice
Winkler Police Service	@WinklerPolice
Winnipeg Police Service	@wpgpolice
Dakota Ojibway Police Service	@DOPSHQ1

Newfoundland and Labrador

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Manitoba	@rcmpmb, @GRCManitoba
Altona Police Service	@AltonaPolice
Brandon Police Service	@BrandonPolice
Brandon Police Service School Resource Officers	@bpsro
Morden Police Service	@MordenPolice
Winkler Police Service	@WinklerPolice
Winnipeg Police Service	@wpgpolice
Dakota Ojibway Police Service	@DOPSHQ1

Prince Edward Island

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Prince Edward Island	@RCMPPEI, @GRCIPE
RCMP Prince Edward Island Federal Investigations Unit	@rcmpccpei
RCMP Prince Edward Island Traffic Unit	@grcivetrafic, @RCMPPEITraffic
Summerside Police	@SsidePolice
Kensington Police	@KtownPolice

Nunavut

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Nunavut	@RCMPNunavut, @GRCNunavut

New Brunswick

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP New Brunswick	@RCMPNB, @GRCNB
Fredericton Police	@CityFredPolice
Kennebecasis Regional Police	@KRPFnb
Saint John Police	@saintjohnpolice

Ontario

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Ontario	@RCMPONT, @GRCONT
Ontario Provincial Police	@OPP_News, @OPP_Nouvelles
Ontario Provincial Police Greater Toronto Area	@OPP_GTATraffic
Ontario Provincial Police Recruitment Unit	@OPP_Hire
Ontario Provincial Police Municipal Policing Bureau	@OPP_Mun_Pol
Ontario Provincial Police West Region	@OPP_WR
Ontario Provincial Police Central Region	@OPP_CR
Ontario Provincial Police North East Region	@OPP_NER
Ontario Provincial Police North West Region	@OPP_NWR
Amherstburg Police Service	@AburgPolice
Barrie Police Service	@BarriePolice
Barrie Police Service Canine Unit	@BarriePoliceK9
Barrie Police Service Recruitment Unit	@BPSRecruiter
Belleville Police Service	@BLVPolice
Brantford Police Service	@BrantfordPolice
Brockville Police Service	@BPS_News
Brockville Police Service Community Safety Officer	@BPS_SAFETY
Chatham-Kent Police Service	@CKPSMedia
Chatham-Kent Police Service Traffic Unit	@CKPSTraffic
Cobourg Police Service	@CobourgPolice
Cornwall Police Service	@CCPSmedia
Dryden Police Service	@DrydenPolice
Durham Regional Police Service	@DRPS
Durham Regional Police Service Canine Unit	@DRPS_K9

Durham Regional Police Service Youth in Policing	@drps_yip
Gananoque Police Service	@GananoquePolice
Sudbury Police Service	@SudburyPolice
Guelph Police Service	@gpsmedia
University of Guelph Campus Community Police	@uofgpolice
Halton Regional Police Service	@HaltonPolice, @HRPSRIS
Halton Regional Police Service Burlington District	@HRPSBurl
Halton Regional Police Service Oakville District	@HRPSOak
Halton Regional Police Service Marine Unit	@HRPSMarine
Halton Regional Police Service Canine Unit	@HRPSK9
Hamilton Police Service	@HamiltonPolice
Hamilton Police Service Canine Unit	@HPSCanine
Hamilton Police Service Marine Unit	@HPSMarine
Hamilton Police Service Recruitment Unit	@JoinHPS
Hamilton Police Service Auxiliary and Volunteer Unit	@HPSAuxiliary
Hamilton Police Service Division 3 School Liaison	@HPSDiv3Schools
Hamilton Police Service Action Team 4	@HPSActionTeam4
Kawartha Lakes Police Service Community Services	@KLPCSO
Kingston Police	@KingstonPolice
Kingston Military Police	@MP_Kingston
LaSalle Police Service	@LaSallePoliceON
London Police ON	@lpsmediaoffice
Niagara Regional Police Service	@NiagRegPolice
Niagara Regional Police Service Traffic	@NiagaraTraffic
Niagara Regional Police Service Recruitment Unit	@NRPSRecruiting
Niagara Regional Police Service Traffic Enforcement Unit	@NRPSRoadSafety
Niagara Regional Police Service Canine Unit	@NRPSK9
Niagara Parks Police	@NiagParksPolice
North Bay Police Service	@NorthBayPolice
Orangeville Police Service	@OrangevillePS
Ottawa Police Service	@OttawaPolice
Ottawa Police Service (updates)	@OttpoliceMedia
Ottawa Police Service Professional Development Centre	@OttawaPDC
Ottawa Police Youth Advisory Committee	@PoliceYAC
Ottawa Police Service Marine Dive Trails Unit	@MDTOttawaPolice
Ottawa Police Service Diversity & Race Relations Section	@DRRmatters
Owen Sound Police Service	@OwenSoundPolice
Owen Sound Police Service Community Partners	@PoliceOwenSound
Peel Regional Police	@PeelPoliceMedia
Peel Regional Police Homicide and Missing Persons Bureau	@PeelHomicide

Peel Regional Police Diversity Relations Bureau	@PRPDiversity
Peel Regional Police Guns and Gangs Unit	@PeelGundsandGang
Peel Regional Police Youth Education	@PRPyouthed
Peel Regional Police Recruitment Unit	@PeelRecruiting
Peterborough Police Service	@PtboPolice
Rama Police Service	@Rama_Police
Saint Thomas Police Service	@STPSmedia
Sarnia Police Service	@SarniaPolice
Sarnia Police Service Fraud & Scam (Alerts)	@SPS_FraudWatch
Sault Sainte Marie Police Service	@SaultPolice
South Simcoe Police Service	@SouthSimcoePS
South Simcoe Police Service Traffic (alerts)	@SSP_Traffic
South Simcoe Police Service Auxiliary Unit	@SSPAuxiliary
Special Investigations Unit Ontario	@SIUOntario
Stratford Police Service	@StratfordPolic1
Strathroy-Caradoc Police Service	@SCPSofficer
Thunder Bay Police Service	@tbpsmedia
Thunder Bay Police Service Traffic Unit	@tbpsttraffic
Timmins Police Service	@TimminsPolice
Toronto Police Service	@TorontoPolice
Toronto Police Service Operations Centre	@TPSOperations
Toronto Police Service Canine Unit	@TPSK9
Toronto Police Service Homicide Unit	@TPSHomicide
Toronto Police Service Divisional Policing Support Unit	@DPSU_TPS
Waterloo Regional Police Service	@WRPSToday
Waterloo Regional Police Service Canine Unit	@K9wrps
West Grey Police Service	@westgreypolice
Windsor Police Service	@WindsorPolice
Windsor Police Service Recruitment Unit	@JoinWPS
University of Windsor Campus Community Police	@uowcampuspolice
Woodstock Police Service	@Woodstock_PS
York Regional Police	@YRP
York Regional Police Duty Office	@YRPDutyOffice
Six Nations Police Service (First Nation)	@SNPMiller
Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service (First Nation)	@WikiPolice
Nishnawby-Aski Police Service (First Nation)	@NAPS_Police
UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service (First Nation)	@UCCMPOLICE
Anishinabek Police Service (First Nation)	@anish_police

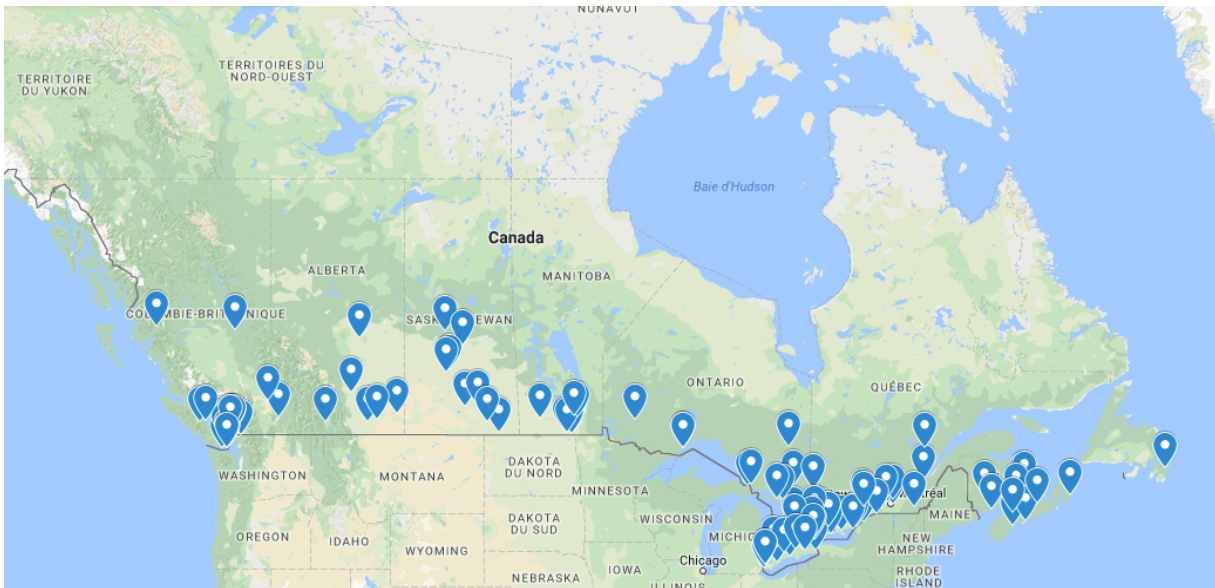
Nova Scotia

<u>Police Department</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
RCMP Nova Scotia	@RCMPNS, @GRCNE
Alherst Police Department	@AmherstPD
Bridgewater Police	@policenews
Cape Breton Regional Police	@CBRegPolice
Halifax Regional Police	@HfxRegPolice
Kentville Police	@KentvillePS
New Glasgow Regional Police	@NGRegPolice

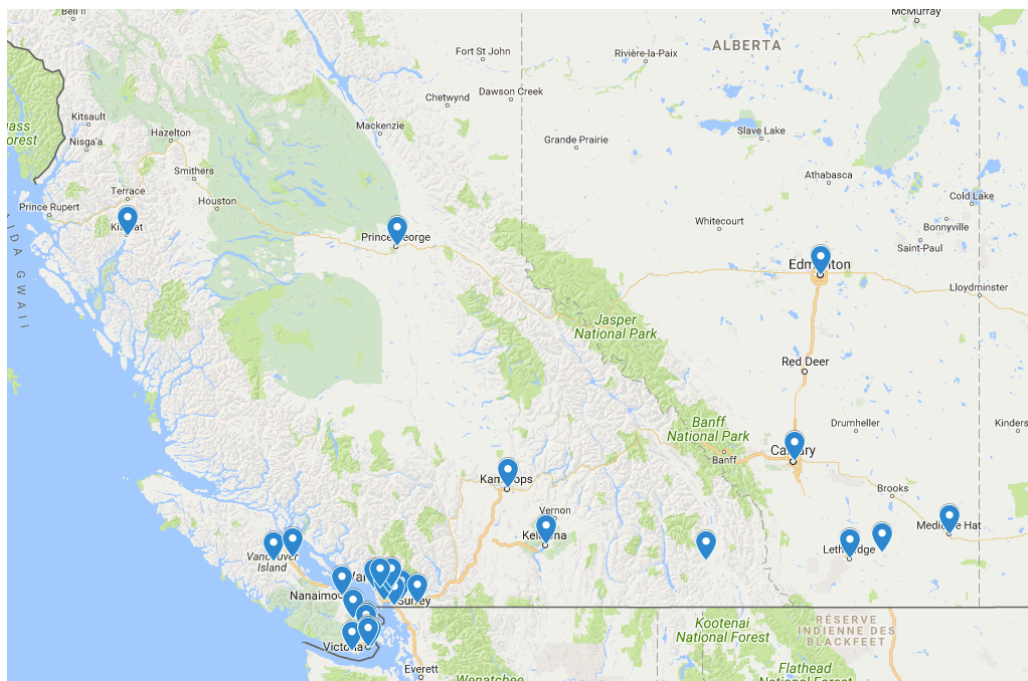
Appendix B. Maps of studied Twitter accounts in Canada

The maps in the *Appendices B* and *D* have been generated via Google's MyMaps.

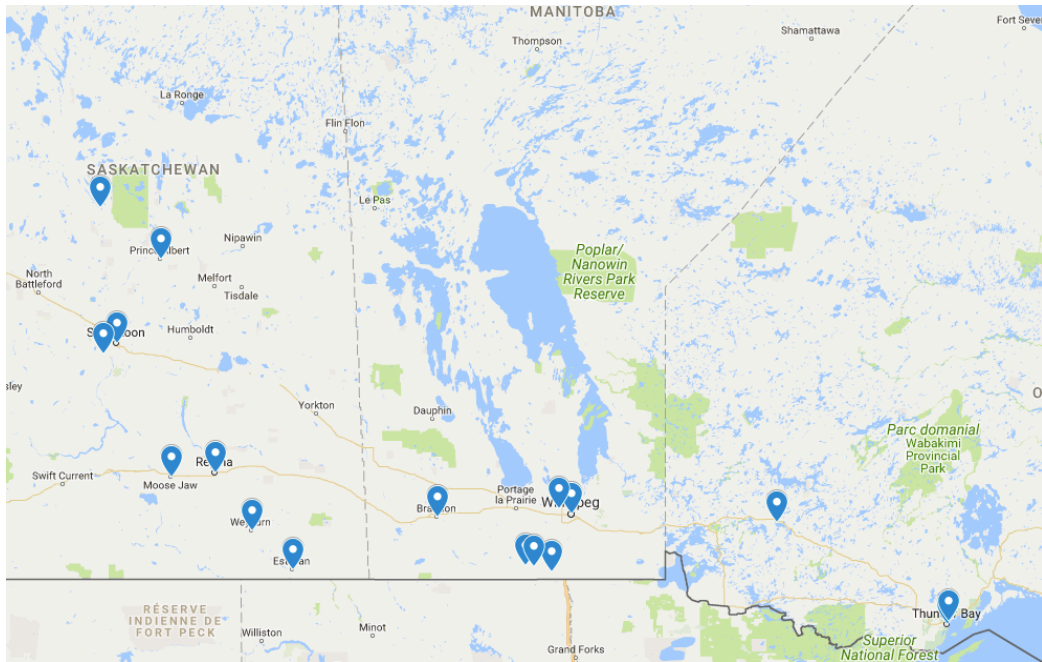
Overview of the studied accounts in Canada. (Knop, 2018b)



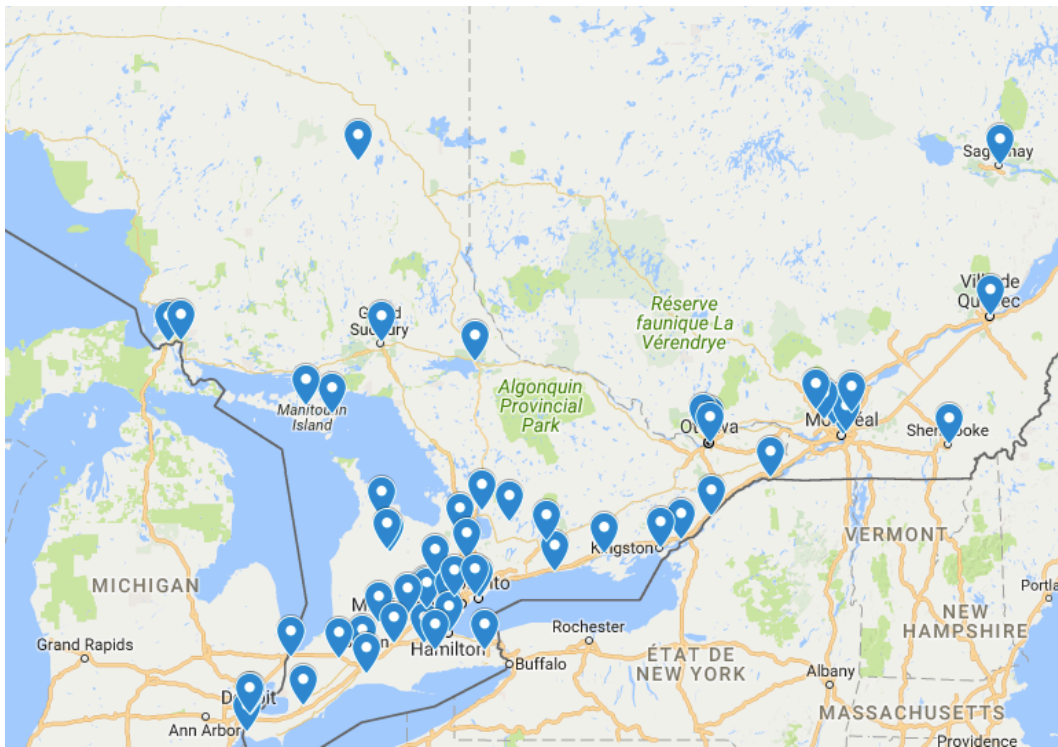
Western Canada. (Knop, 2018i)



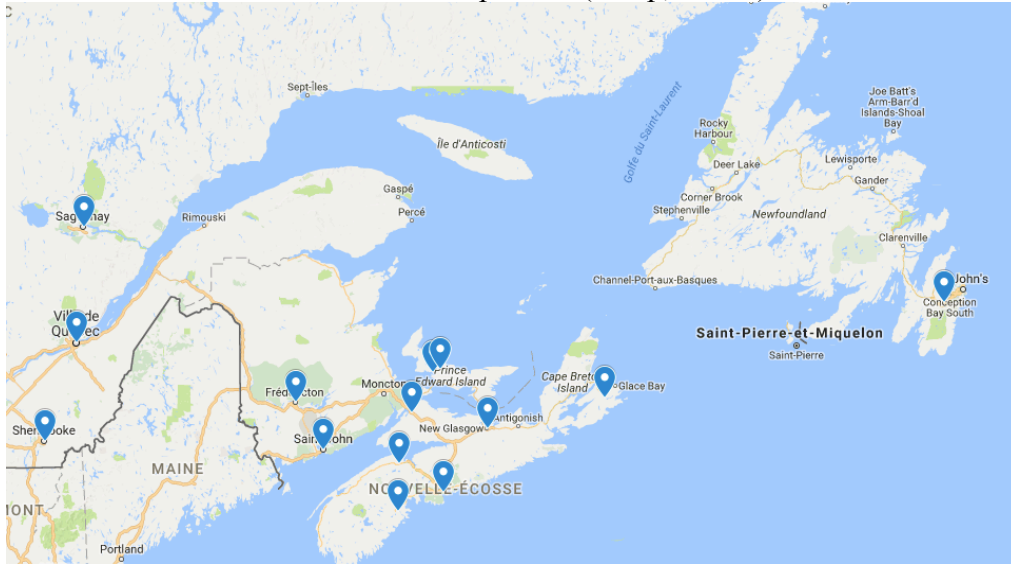
Central Canada. (Knop, 2018c)



Eastern Canada, part I. (Knop, 2018d)



Eastern Canada, part II. (Knop, 2018e)



Appendix C. List of studied Twitter accounts in the United States of America

<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
Alabama	Birmingham	@bhampolice
	Montgomery	@safemontgomery
Alaska	Anchorage	@APDInfo
	Fairbanks	@FPD_Police
Arizona	Phoenix	@phoenixpolice
	Tucson	@Tucson_Police
Arkansas	Little Rock	@LRpolice
	Fort Smith	@FortSmithPD
California	Los Angeles	@LAPDHQ
	San Diego	@SanDiegoPD
Colorado	Denver	@DenverPolice
	Colorado Springs	@CSPDPIO
Connecticut	Bridgeport	@bptpolice
Delaware	Wilmington	@WPDPIO
	Dover	@DoverDEPolice
Florida	Jacksonville	@JSOPIO
	Miami	@MiamiPD
Georgia	Atlanta	@Atlanta_Police
	Columbus	@CPDGA
Hawaii	Honolulu	@honolulupolice
Idaho	Boise	@BoisePD
	Meridian	@PoliceMeridian
Illinois	Chicago	@Chicago_Police
	Aurora	@AuroraPoliceIL
Indiana	Indianapolis	@IMPDnews
	Fort Wayne	@FortWaynePolice

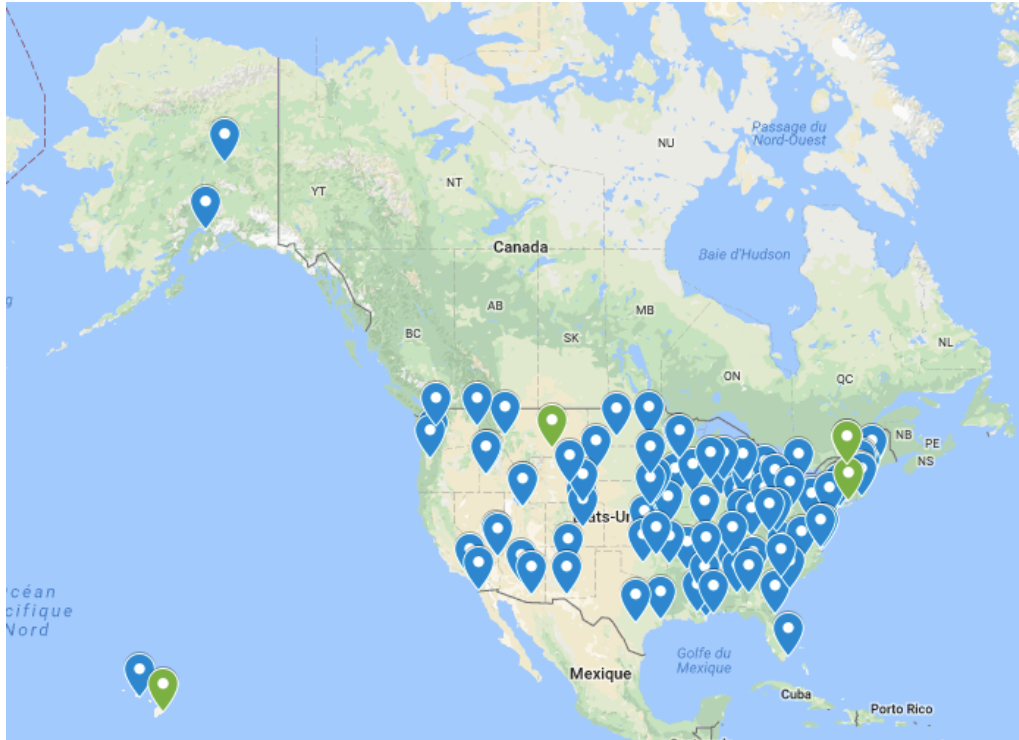
<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
Iowa	Des Moines	@DMPolice
	Cedar Rapids	@CR_Police
Kansas	Wichita	@WichitaPolice
	Overland Park	@OverlandPark_PD
Kentucky	Louisville	@LMPD
	Lexington	@lexkypolice
Louisiana	New Orleans	@NOPDnews
	Baton Rouge	@BRPD
Maine	Portland	@PolicePortland
	Lewiston	@LewistonMainePD
Maryland	Baltimore	@BaltimorePolice
	Frederick	@Fred_MD_Police
Massachusetts	Boston	@bostonpolice
	Worcester	@WorcesterPD
Michigan	Detroit	@detroitpolice
	Grand Rapids	@GrandRapidsPD
Minnesota	Minneapolis	@MinneapolisPD
	Saint Paul	@sppdPIO
Missouri	Kansas City	@kcpolice
	Saint Louis	@SLMPD
Montana	Missoula	@mpd_tweet
Nebraska	Omaha	@OmahaPolice
	Lincoln	@Lincoln_Police
Nevada	Las Vegas	@LVMPD
	Henderson	@HendersonNVPD
New Hampshire	Manchester	@mht_nh_police
	Nashua	@NashuaPolice

<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
New Jersey	Newark	@NewarkNJPolice
	Jersey City	@JerseyCityPD
New Mexico	Albuquerque	@ABQPOLICE
	Las Cruces	@LasCrucesPolice
New York	New York City	@NYPDnews
	Buffalo	@BPDAalerts
North Carolina	Charlotte	@CMPD
	Raleigh	@raleighpolice
North Dakota	Fargo	@FargoPolice
	Bismarck	@BismarckPolice
Ohio	Columbus	@ColumbusPolice
	Cleveland	@CLEpolice
Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	@OKCPD
	Tulsa	@TulsaPolice
Oregon	Portland	@PortlandPolice
	Salem	@SalemPoliceDept
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	@PhillyPolice
	Pittsburgh	@PghPolice
Rhode Island	Providence	@ProvidenceRIPD
	Warwick	@warwickripd
South Carolina	Charleston	@CharlestonPD
	Columbia	@ColumbiaPDSC
South Dakota	Sioux Falls	@siouxfallspd
	Rapid City	@RapidCityPD
Tennessee	Nashville	@MNPDNashville
	Memphis	@MEM_PoliceDept
Texas	Houston	@houstonpolice
	San Antonio	@SATXPolice

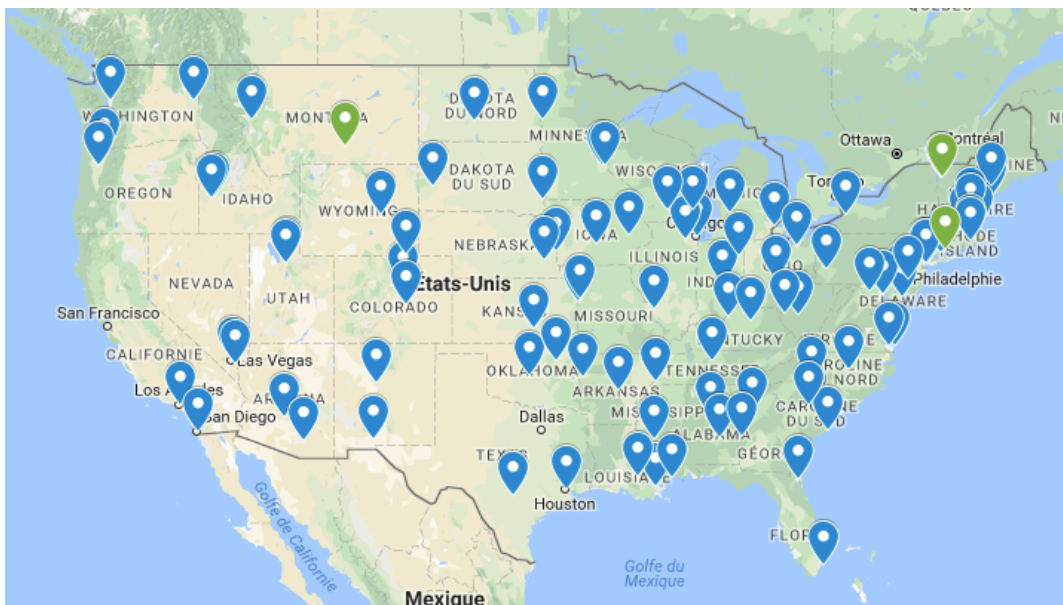
<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Twitter Account</u>
Utah	Salt Lake City	@slcpd
	West Valley City	@WVCPD
Vermont	Burlington	@OneNorthAvenue
Virginia	Virginia Beach	@VBPD
	Norfolk	@NorfolkPD
Washington	Seattle	@SeattlePD
	Spokane	@SpokanePD
West Virginia	Charleston	@CharlestonPDWV
	Huntington	@HPDWV
Wisconsin	Milwaukee	@MilwaukeePolice
	Madison	@madisonpolice
Wyoming	Cheyenne	@CheyennePolice
	Casper	@CasperPolice

Appendix D. Maps of studied Twitter accounts in the United States of America

Overview of the studied accounts in the United States of America. (Knop, 2018h)



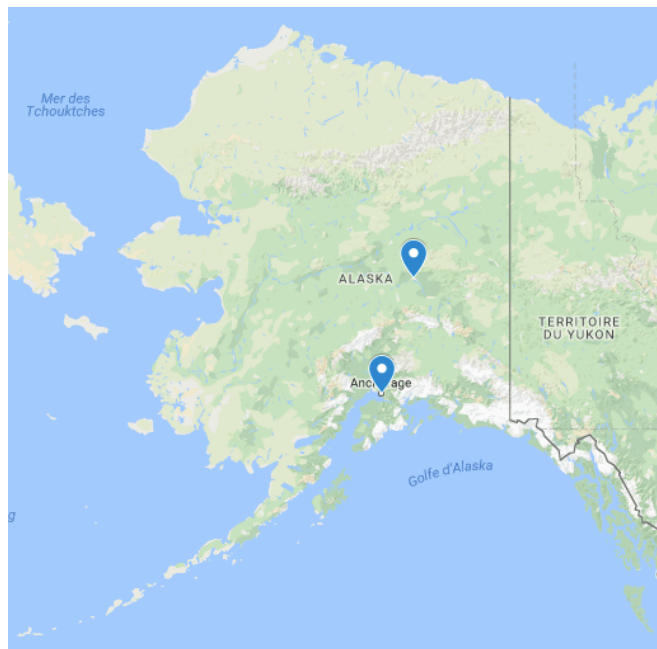
Mainland United States of America. (Knop, 2018g)



Hawaii. (Knop, 2018f)



Alaska. (Knop, 2018a)



Appendix E. List of studied insults

The list of keywords used is comprised of insults. Please do not spill your cup of tea and the spoon that comes with it while reading it.

<u>Insults in English</u>		
<i>Fuck, fuk, fucking, fuckin</i>	<i>Cunt</i>	<i>Hoe</i>
<i>Shit, bullshit, shithead</i>	<i>Bitch, biatch</i>	<i>Moron</i>
<i>Ass, Asshole, Arse, Arsehole</i>	<i>Motherfucker, mothafucka,</i> <i>mofo</i>	<i>Retard</i>
<i>Bastard</i>	<i>Damn</i>	<i>Idiot</i>
<i>Dick, dickhead</i>	<i>Douche</i>	<i>Nigger, nigga</i>
<i>Jerk</i>	<i>Dumb</i>	<i>Slut</i>
<i>Scum, scumbag</i>	<i>Pussy</i>	<i>Where</i>
<i>Tramp</i>		

<u>Insults in French</u>		
<i>Salop, salope</i>	<i>Pute, putain</i>	<i>Merde, marde</i>
<i>Enfoiré, enfoirée</i>	<i>Bouffon</i>	<i>Crétin</i>
<i>Con, conne, connard,</i> <i>connasse</i>	<i>Enculé, enculée</i>	<i>Couillon</i>
<i>Garce</i>	<i>Batard</i>	<i>Débile</i>
<i>Tabarnak, tbk</i>	<i>Crisse, criss, critie</i>	<i>Fucké</i>
<i>Ostie, osti, esti</i>	<i>Caliss</i>	<i>Fif</i>
<i>Tapette</i>		
