

# Contours of the Past

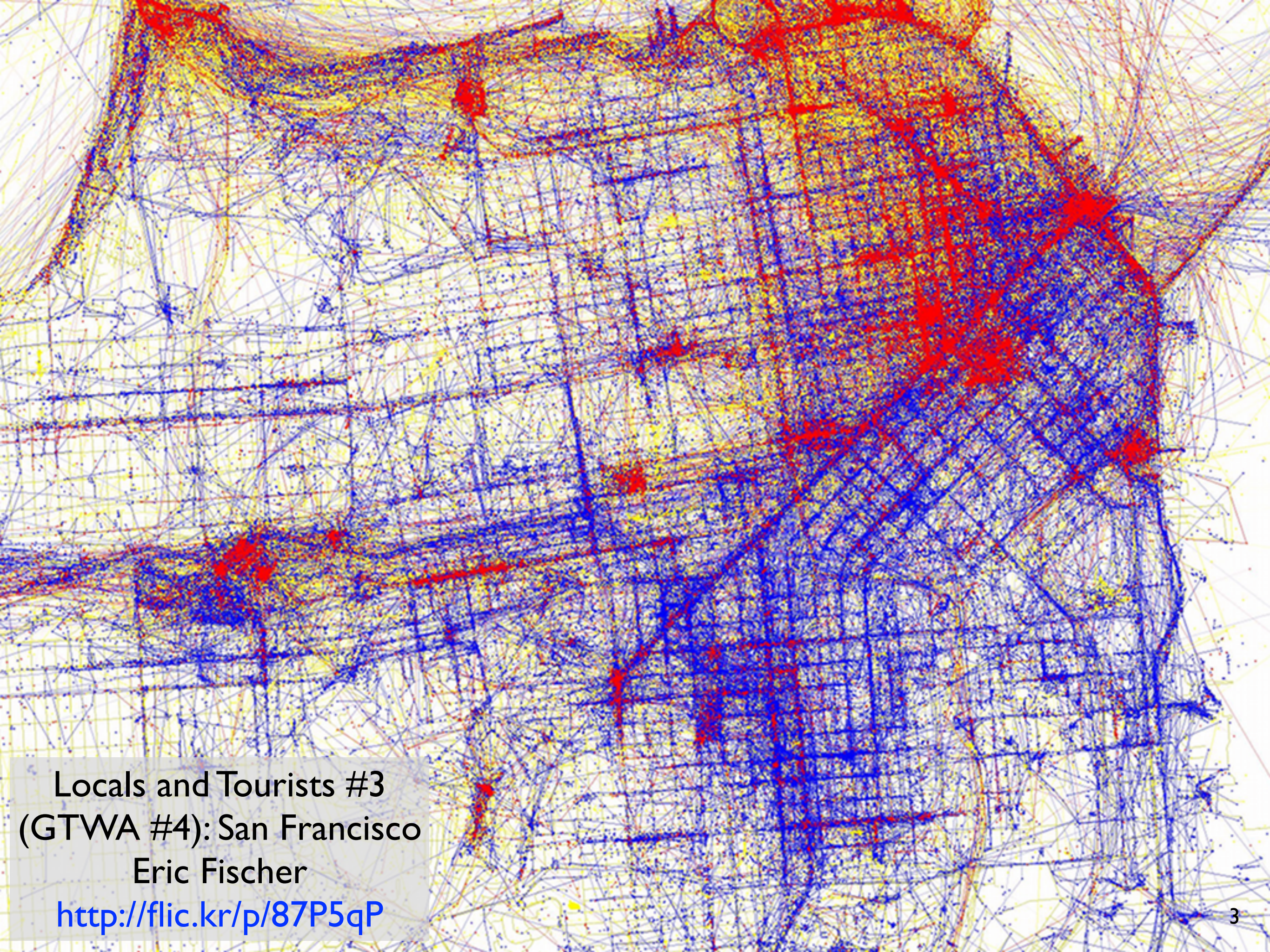
Computationally Exploring U. S. Civil Rights Histories

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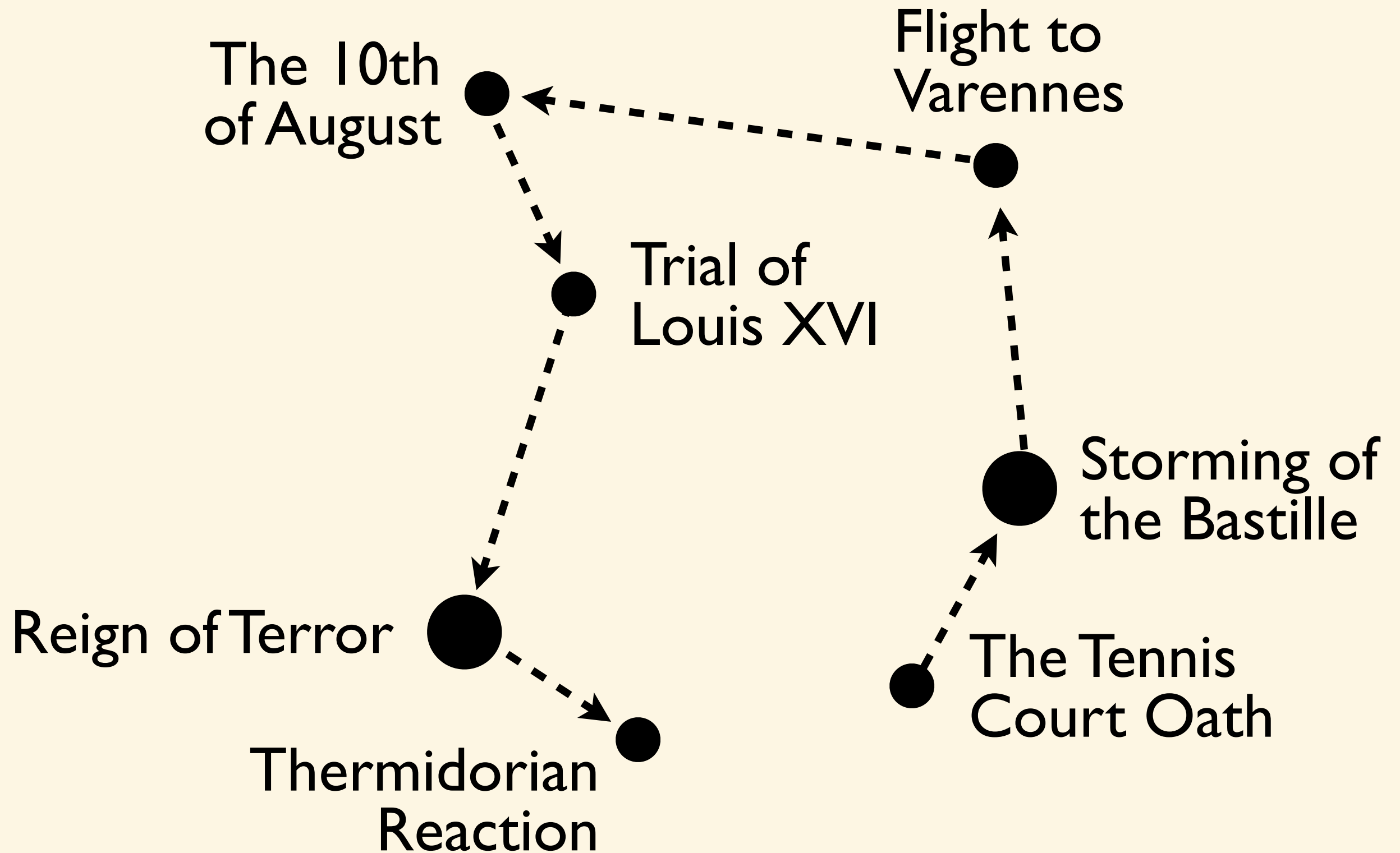


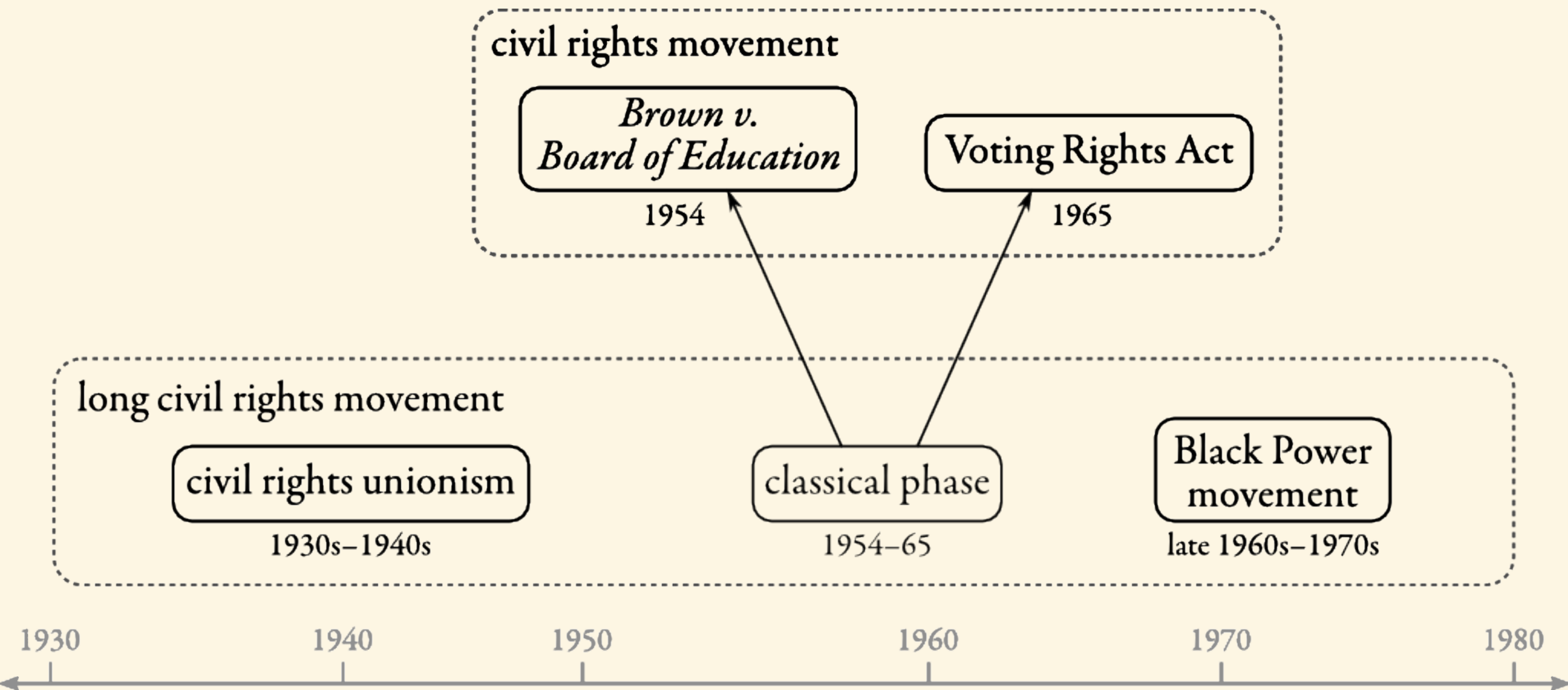




Locals and Tourists #3  
(GTWA #4): San Francisco  
Eric Fischer  
<http://flic.kr/p/87P5qP>







# Publishing the LCRM



<https://lcrm.lib.unc.edu/voice/works/>



# The LCRM Initiative

Center for the Study of the American South \* Southern Oral History Program \* Southern Cultures

**NEW DIGITAL COLLECTION!**  
Our new digital collection is live!  
([link](#))

## Southern Oral History Program

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Home \* Our Mission \* Our Interviews \* Our Research \* Resources & Engagement \* Multimedia \* Staff

### Our Research

Books  
The University History Project  
Listening for a Change  
West Charlotte

## The Long Civil Rights Movement Initiative

The [Long Civil Rights Movement initiative](#) is a project intended to better understand how the South has been shaped by the black and women's liberation movements, the Vietnam War, natural disasters, and conservative politics. Our team of researchers has conducted oral history interviews in Charleston, SC, and Charlotte, NC. Our focus is on the continued resonance of the civil rights movement after the 1960s. We have conducted over 350 interviews, many of which are available online. [Take a look.](#)

<http://www.sohp.org/>

# Our approach

## **Event parsing**

Identifying the individual actions or events communicated by each sentence

## **Narrative clustering**

Grouping together passages that invoke similar patterns of actions and events



# Frame

**ATTACK:** An **Assailant** physically attacks a **Victim** (which is usually but not always sentient), causing or intending to cause the **Victim** physical damage. A **Weapon** used by the **Assailant** may also be mentioned, in addition to the usual **Place, Time, Purpose, Reason**, etc. Sometimes a location is used metonymically to stand for the **Assailant** or the **Victim**.

*ambush.n, ambush.v, assail.v, assault.n, assault.v, attack.n, attack.v, attacker.n, bomb.v, bombing.n, charge.n, charge.v, fall\_(upon).v, fire.n, hit.v, incursion.n, infiltrate.v, infiltration.n, invade.v, invader.n, jump.v, lay\_(into).v, offensive.a, offensive.n, onset.n, onslaught.n, raid.n, raid.v, SAF.n, safire.n, set\_(upon).v, small arms fire.n, storm.v, strike.n, strike.v*

# Frame annotation

## ATTACK

Is **he** **invading** **Iraq** just to cover other shortcomings?

Assailant

Victim

Purpose



# Our approach

## **Event parsing**

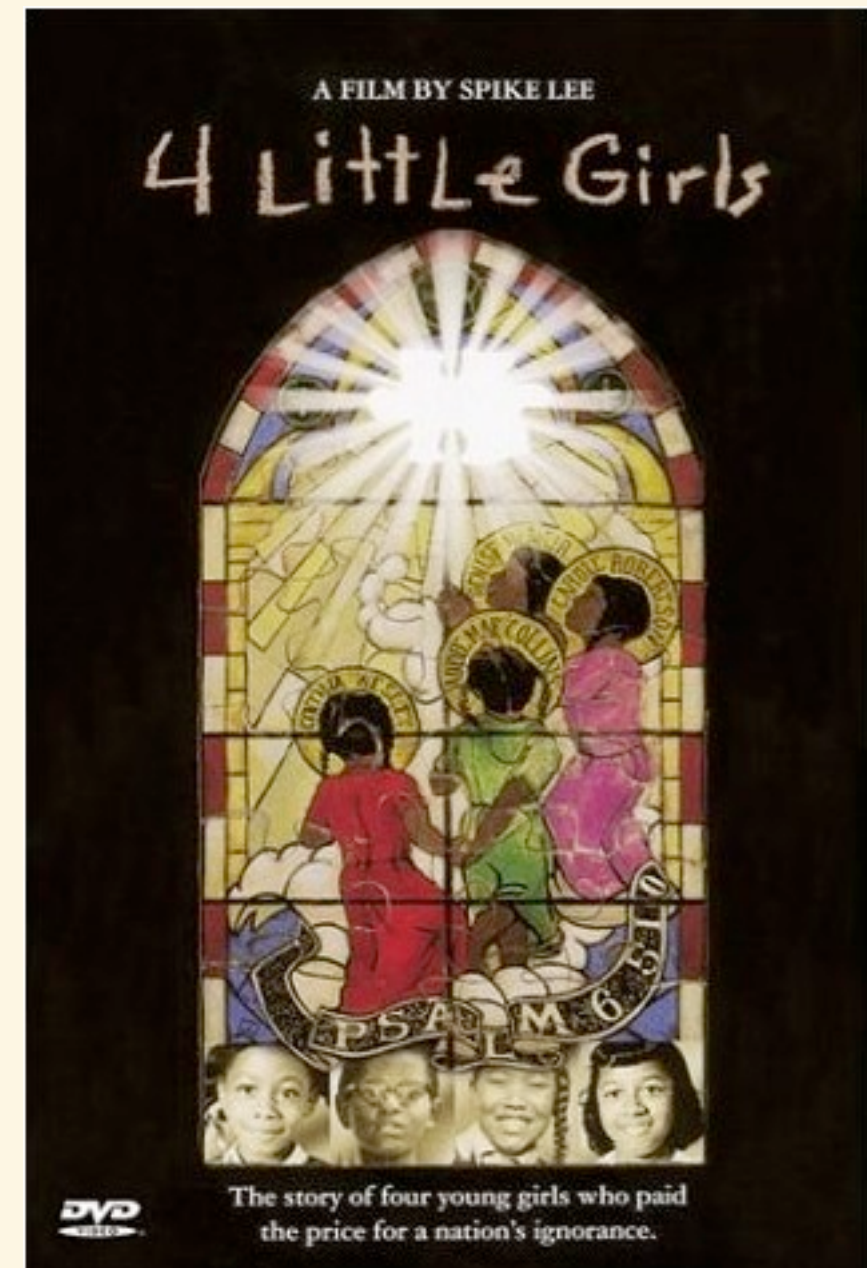
Identifying the individual actions or events communicated by each sentence

## **Narrative clustering**

Grouping together passages that invoke similar patterns of actions and events

# 16th St. Church Bombing

Birmingham, Alabama, September 15 1963





# Manual event identification

33 passages referencing or recounting the bombing

Five monographs and sixteen interviews

Passages ranged from one sentence to 37 sentences (median of two sentences)

175 sentences in total

# Frame parsing

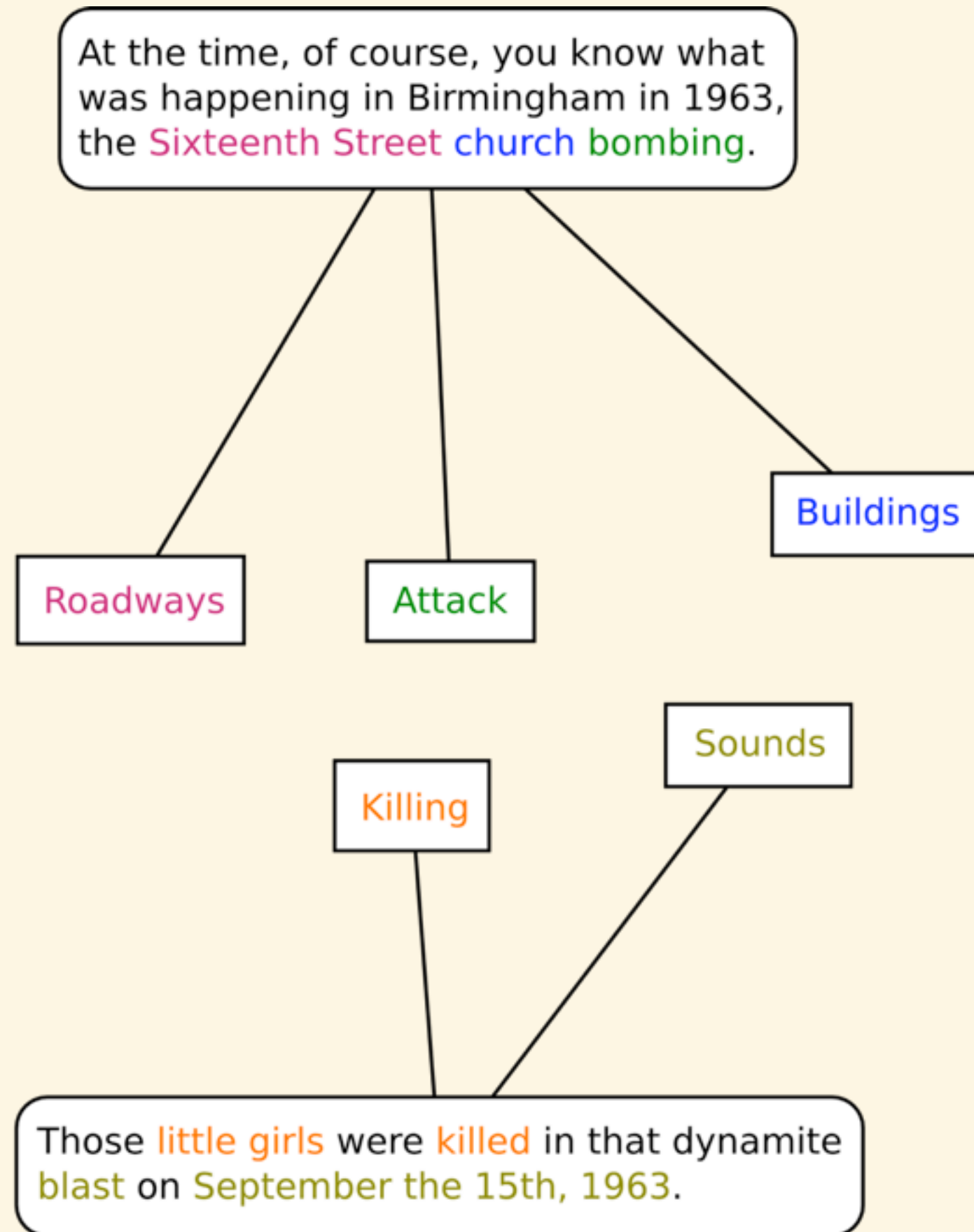
- Ran the SEMAFOR frame-semantic parser\* over the 175 sentences
- Ignored frames that did not appear in at least two of the 33 passages
- Are the frames accurate, and can we use them to build up event representations?

\* <http://www.ark.cs.cmu.edu/SEMAFOR/>

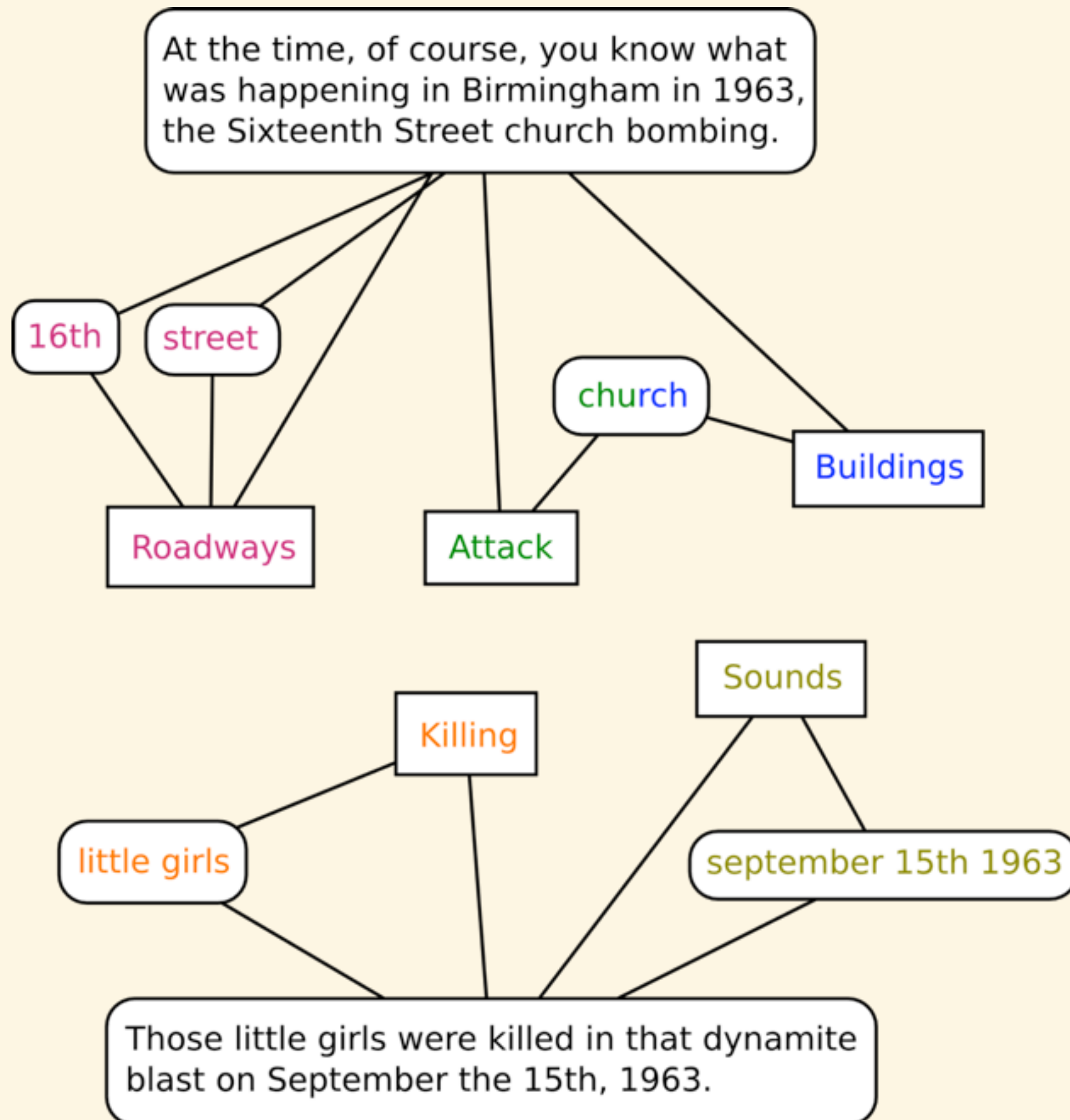


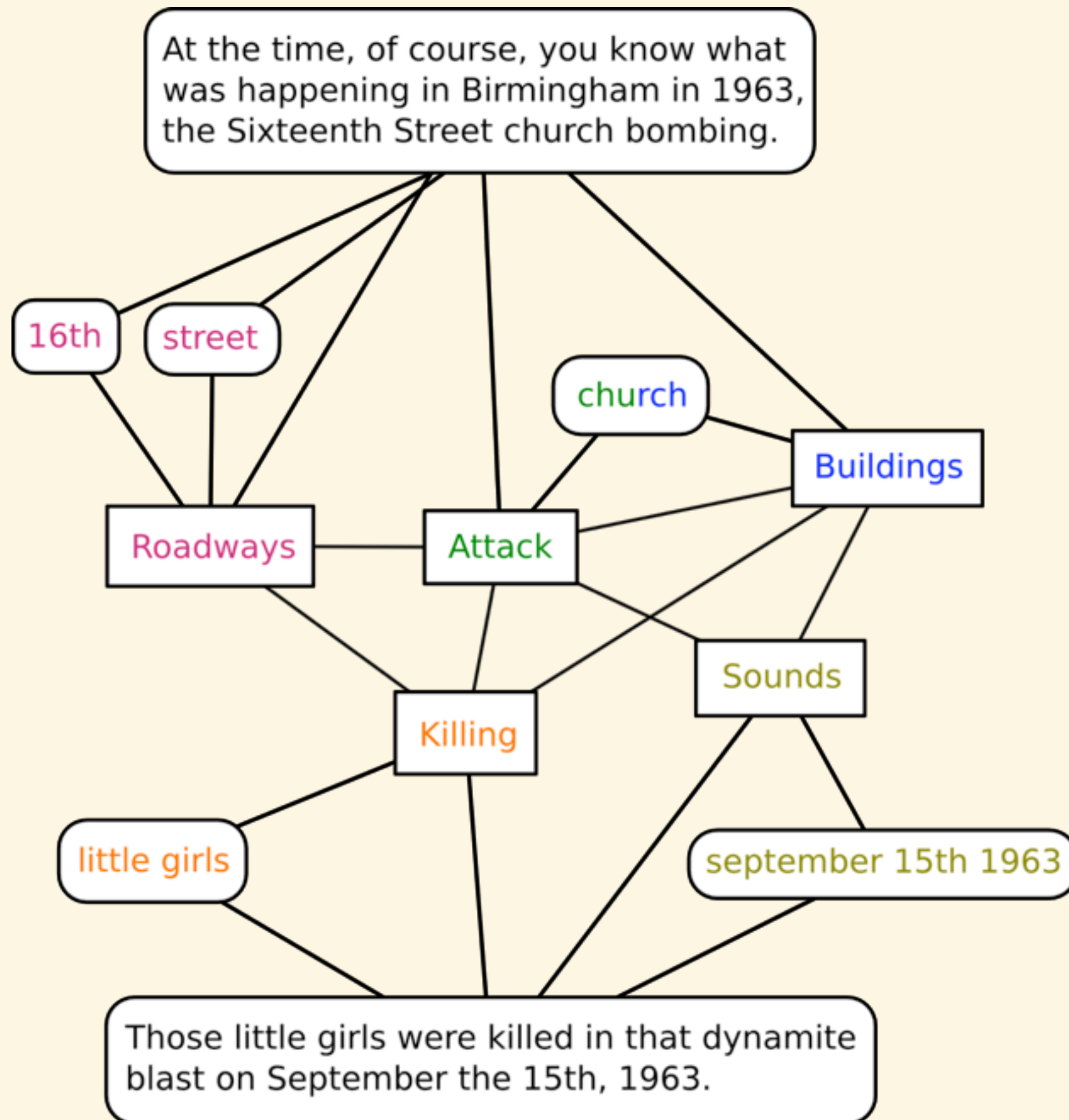
At the time, of course, you know what was happening in Birmingham in 1963, the Sixteenth Street church bombing.

Those little girls were killed in that dynamite blast on September the 15th, 1963.

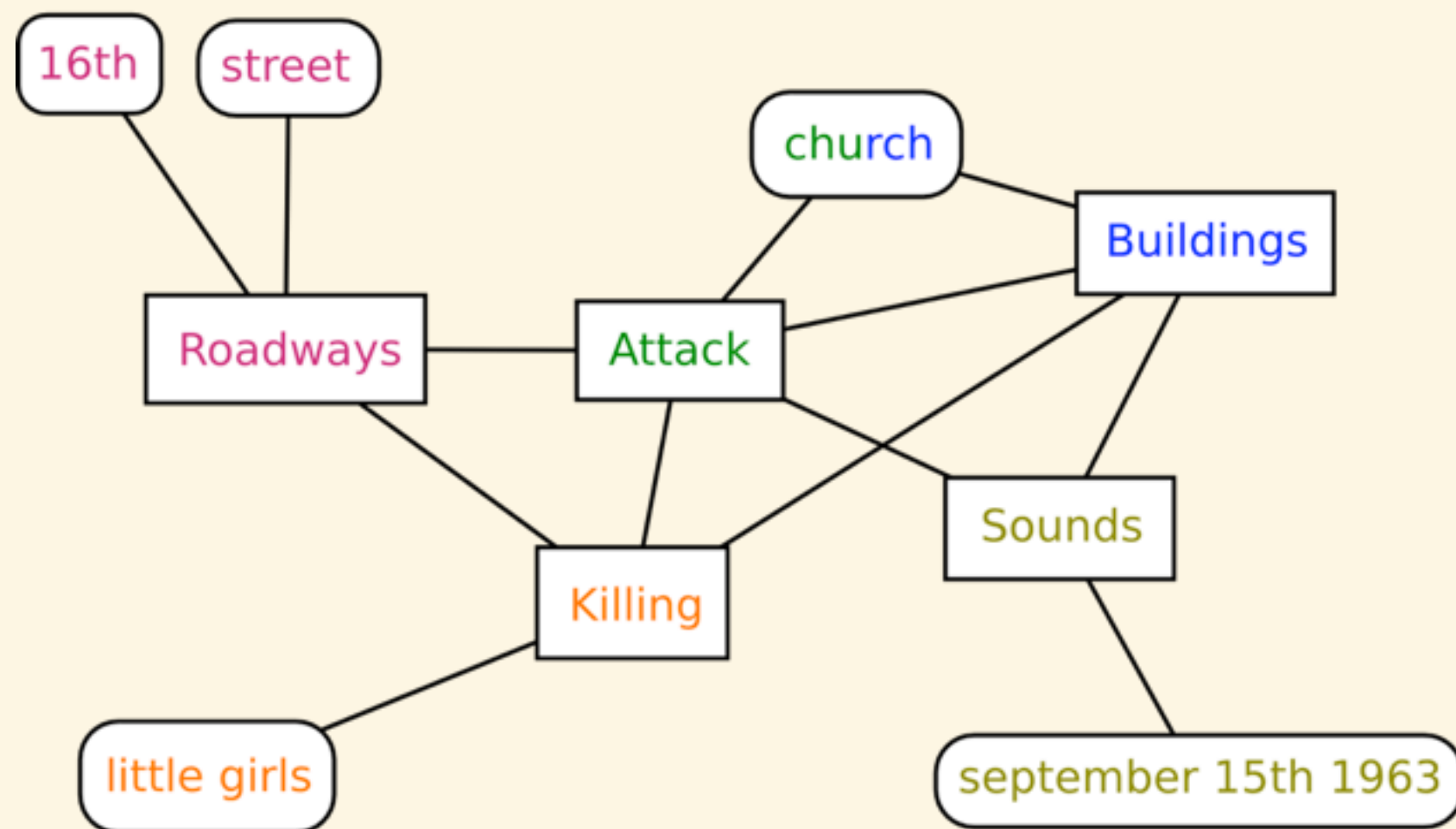












# Problems

- Limited set of passages that we already know reference the same event
- Need more data to learn relationships among frames and entities
- SEMAFOR parser weak at assigning roles
- Named entity recognition & co-reference resolution needed to link entities

# Ongoing work

- Manual annotation to enable quantitative evaluation of frame parsers
- FrameNet vs. PropBank
- Experimenting with different clustering methods





- Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program
- Early Career Development grant
- July 2012 – June 2015

# Thanks!

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