

Breaking news on Twitter

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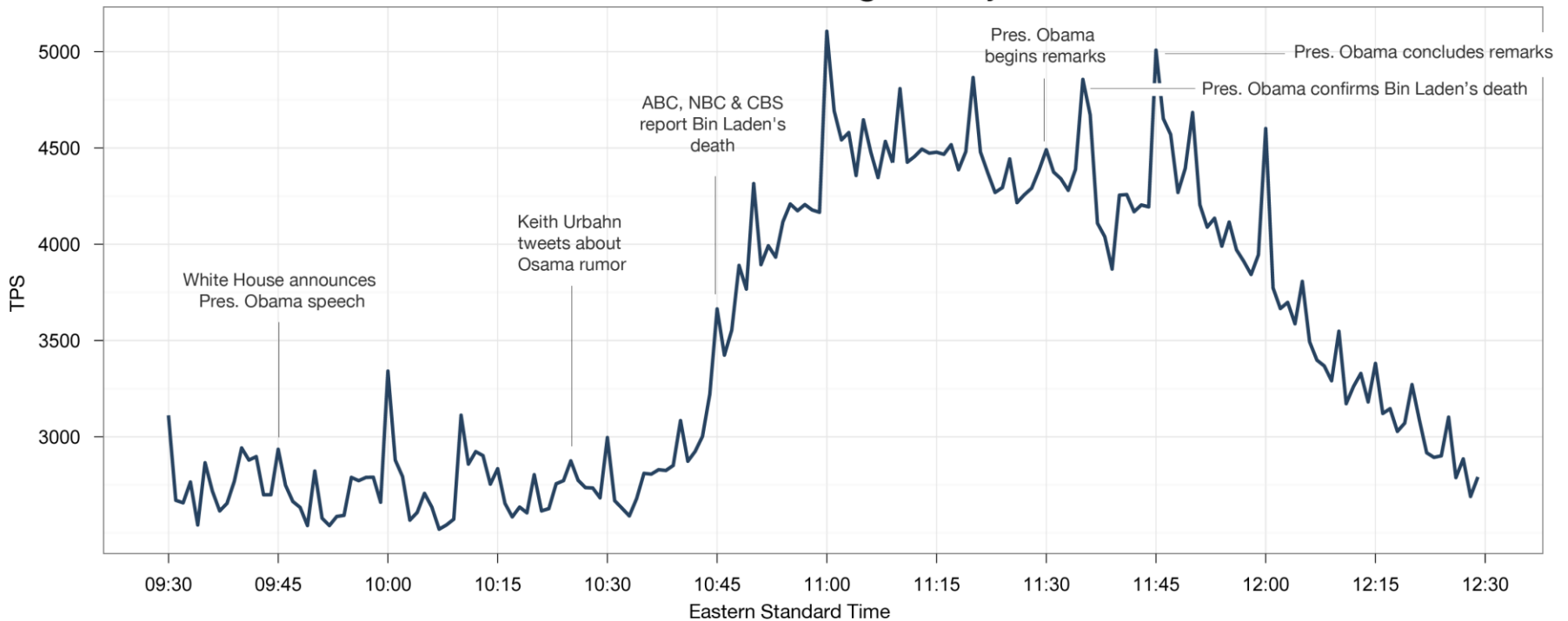
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Twitter broke Osama Bin Laden's death

Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011

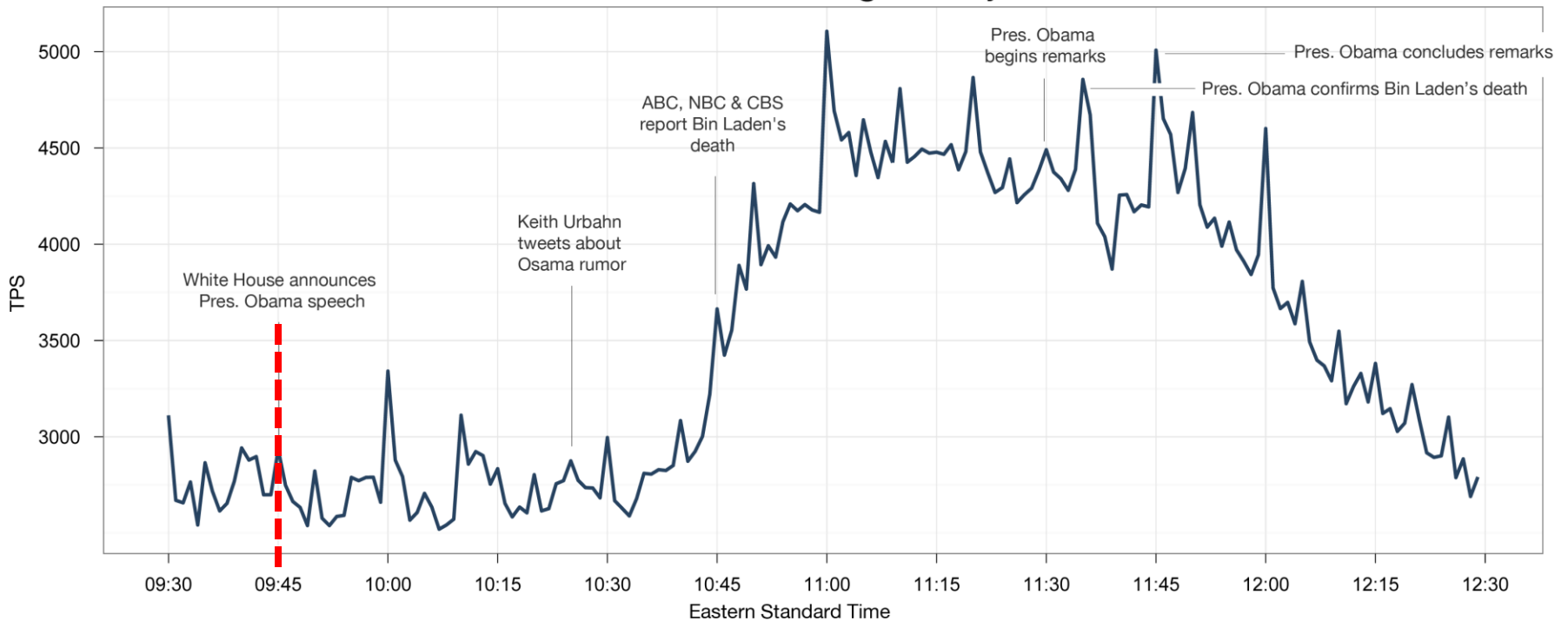


<http://www.flickr.com/photos/twitteroffice/5681263084>

Twitter broke Osama Bin Laden's death

9:45 pm: White House announces Pres. Obama speech

Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011

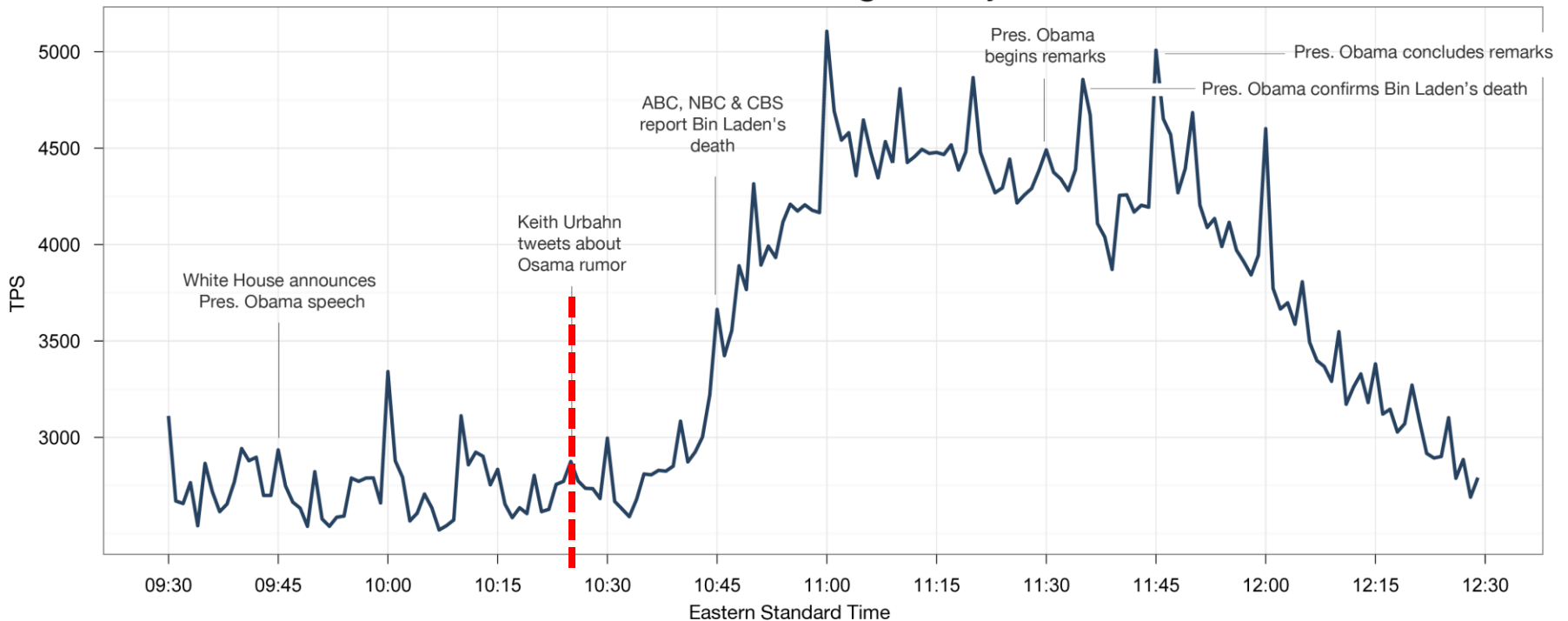


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Twitter broke Osama Bin Laden's death

10:24 pm: Keith Urbahn tweets about Osama rumor

Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011

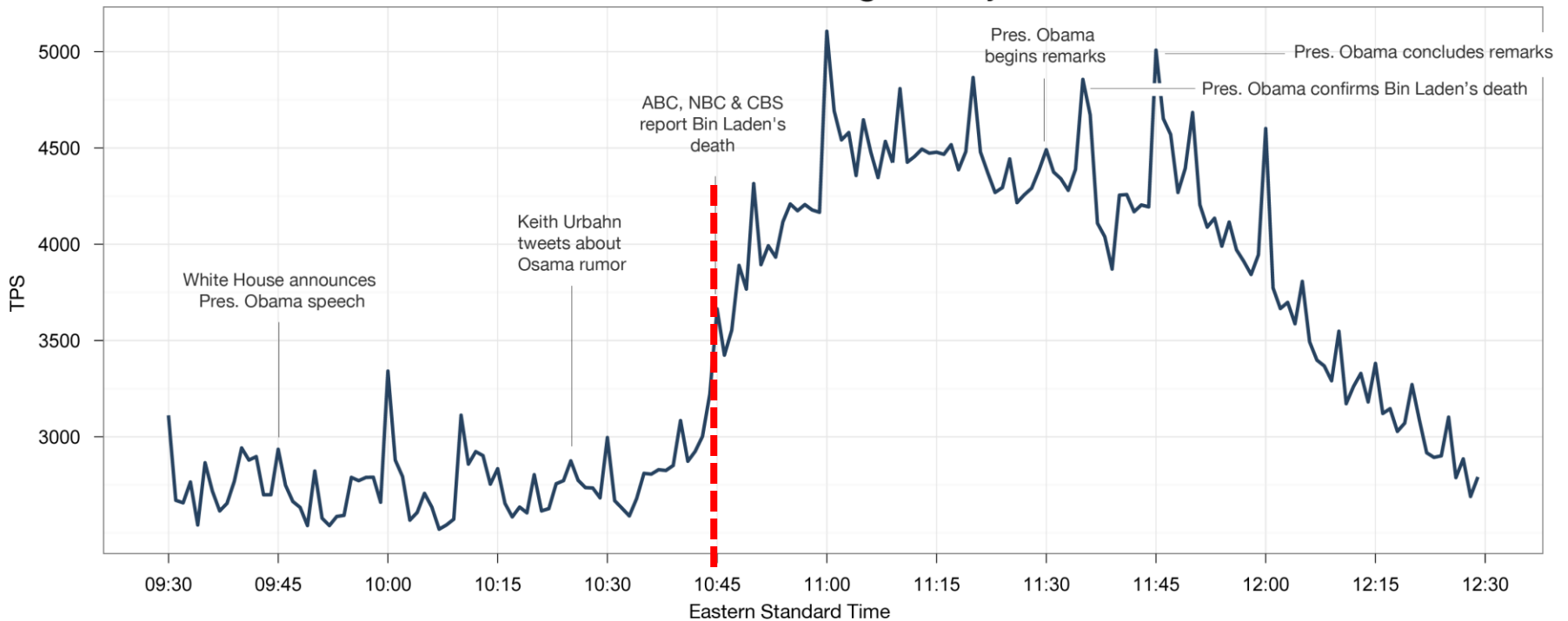


<http://www.flickr.com/photos/twitteroffice/5681263084>

Twitter broke Osama Bin Laden's death

10:45 pm: ABC, NBC & CBS report Bin Laden's death

Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011

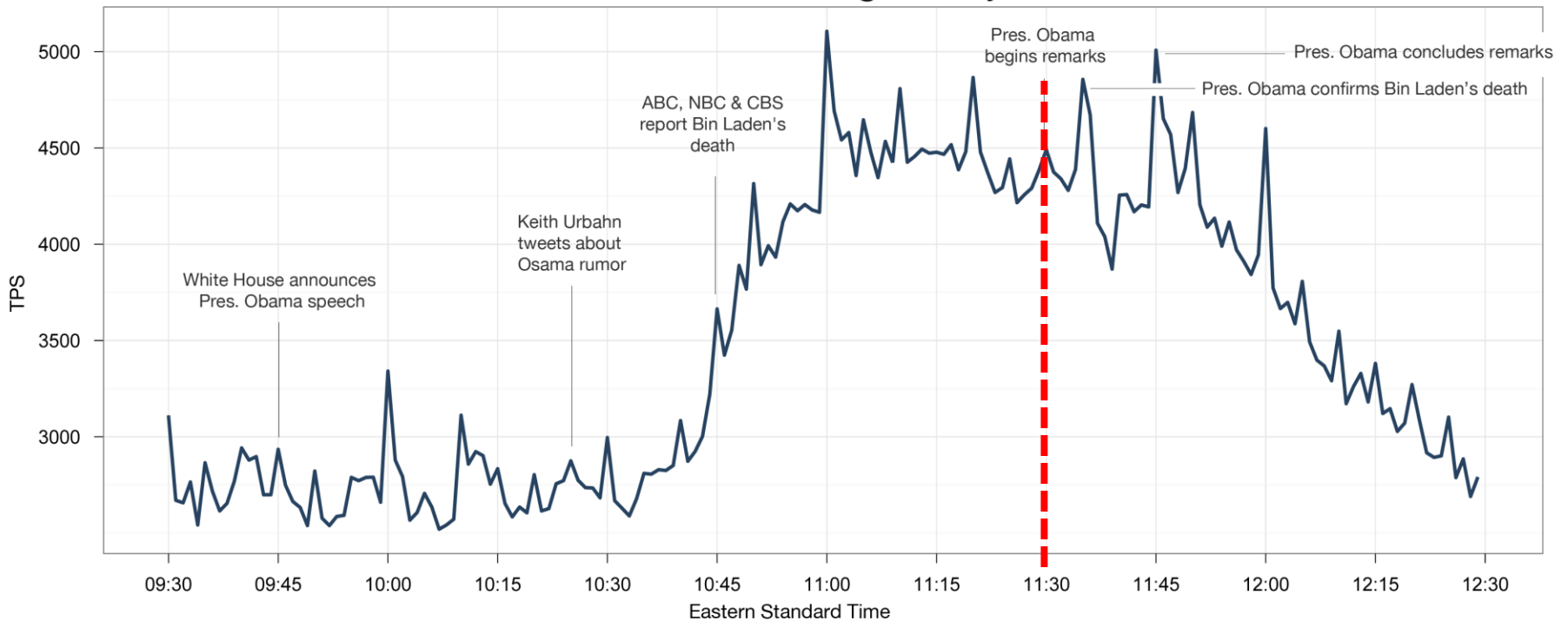


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Twitter broke Osama Bin Laden's death

11:30 pm: Pres. Obama begins remarks

Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011



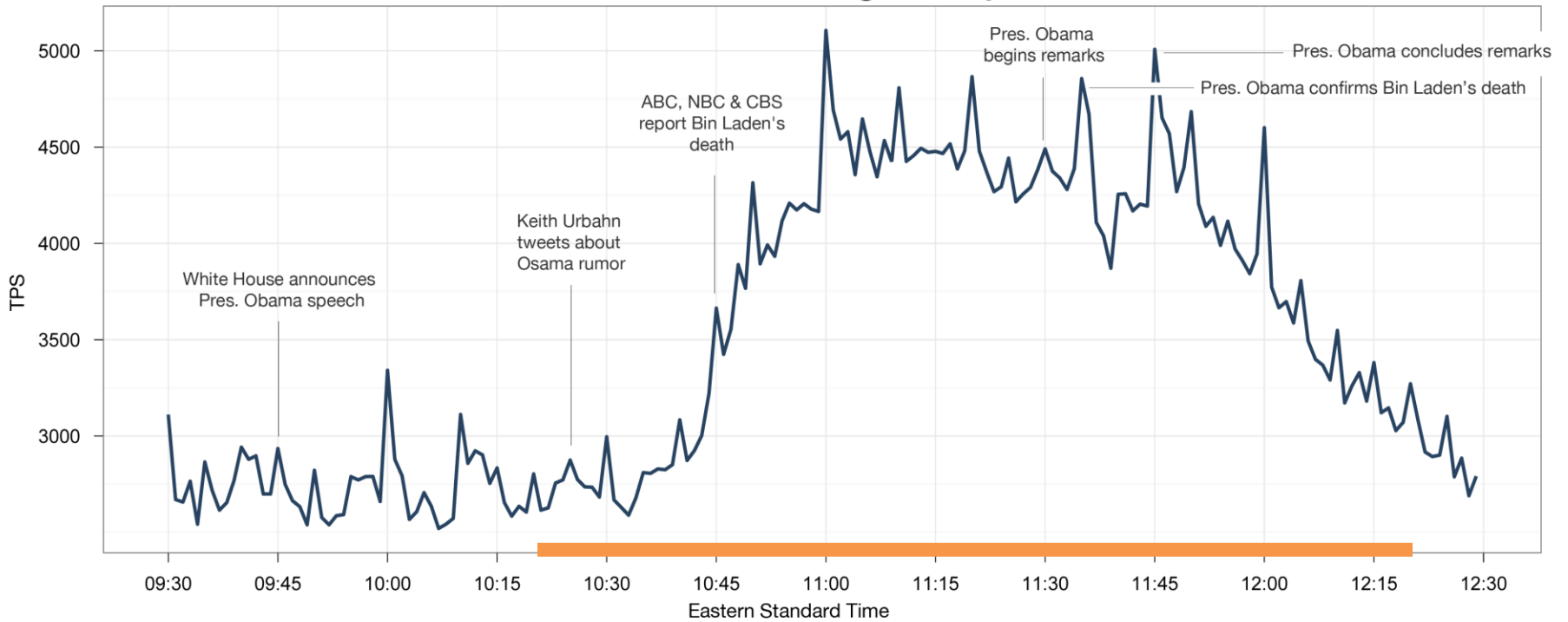
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/twitteroffice/5681263084>

Prior Analysis

- Brian Stelter (New York Times): How the Bin Laden Announcement Leaked Out
<http://mediadecoder.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/01/how-the-osama-announcement-leaked-out/>
- Gilad Lotan (SocialFlow): Breaking Bin Laden: Visualizing the Power of a Single Tweet
<http://blog.socialflow.com/post/5246404319/breaking-bin-laden-visualizing-the-power-of-a-single>
- Frédéric Filloux (Guardian): Lessons from the Osama bin Laden Coverage
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2011/may/09/lessons-from-bin-laden-coverage>

Data

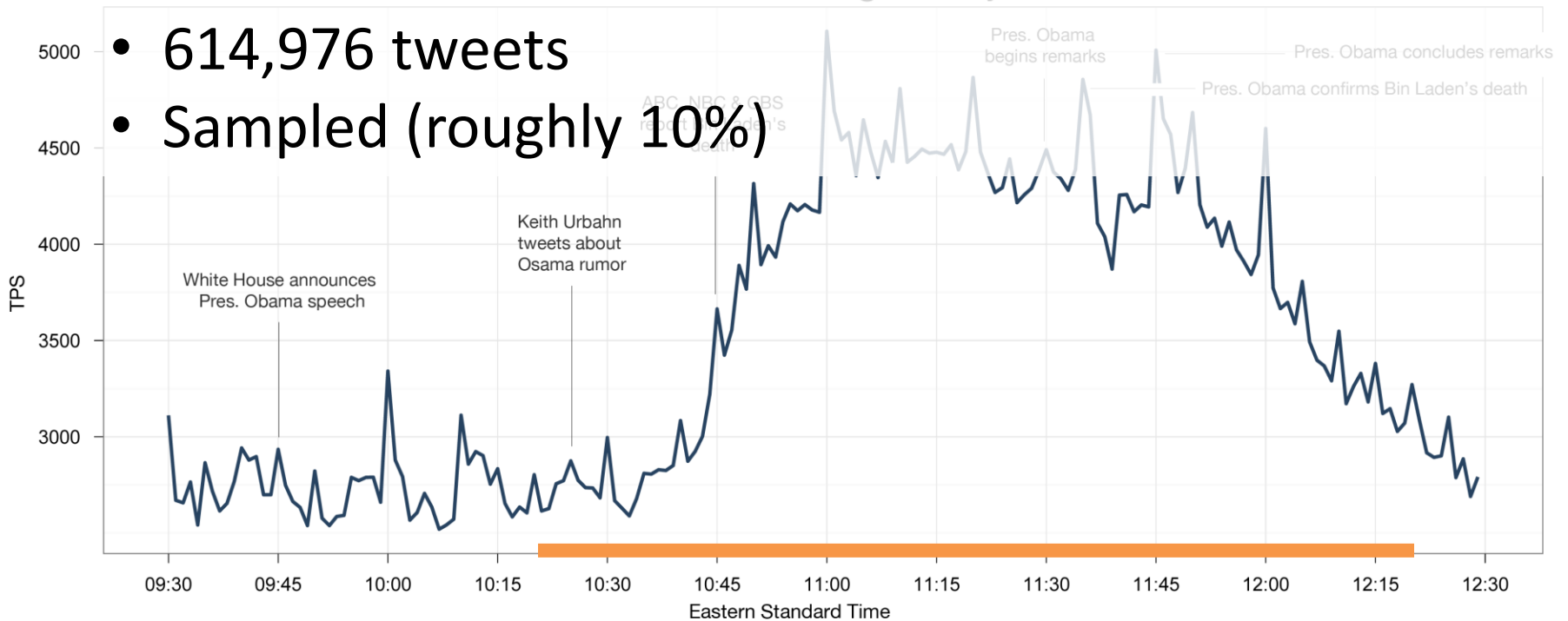
Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/twitteroffice/5681263084>

Data

- May 1st 10:20 pm EST – May 2nd 12:20 am EST
- “laden” Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011

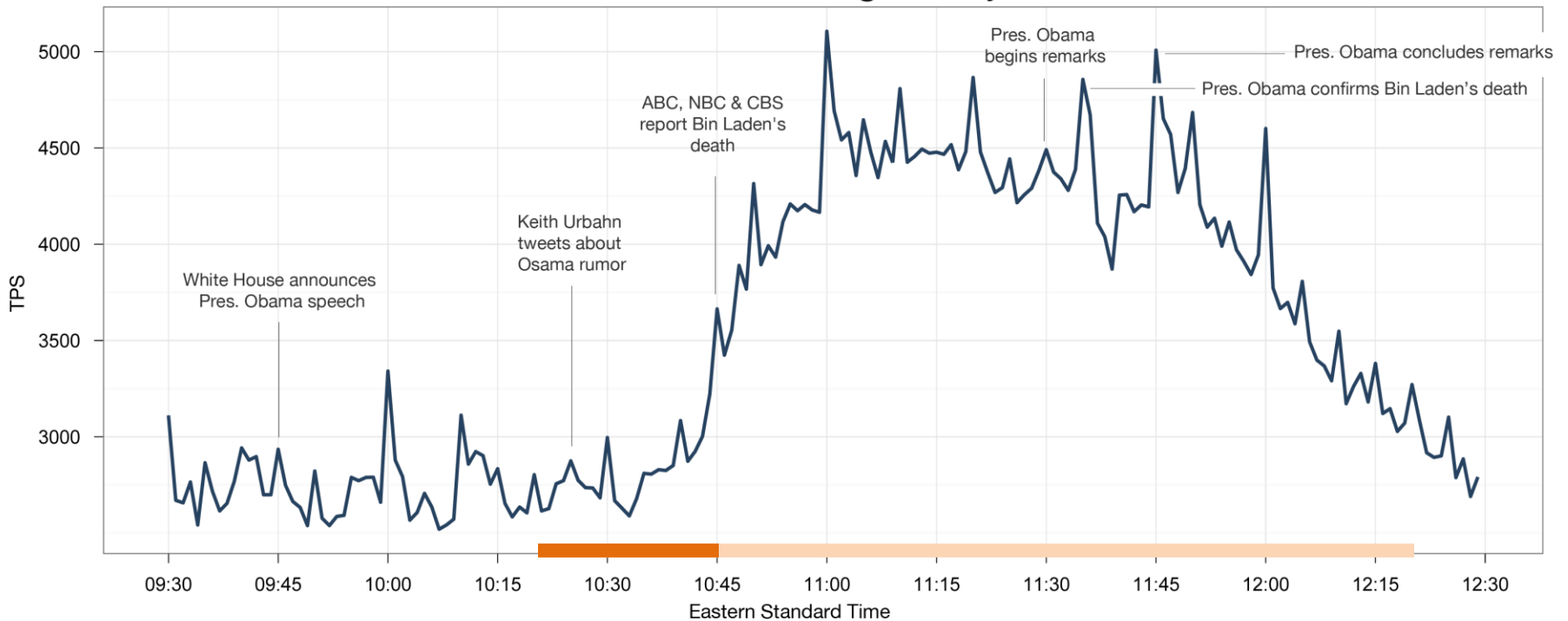


<http://www.flickr.com/photos/twitteroffice/5681263084>

Did Twitter Break the news?

Tweets posted between 10:20 and 10:45 pm

Tweets Per Second: Evening of May 1, 2011



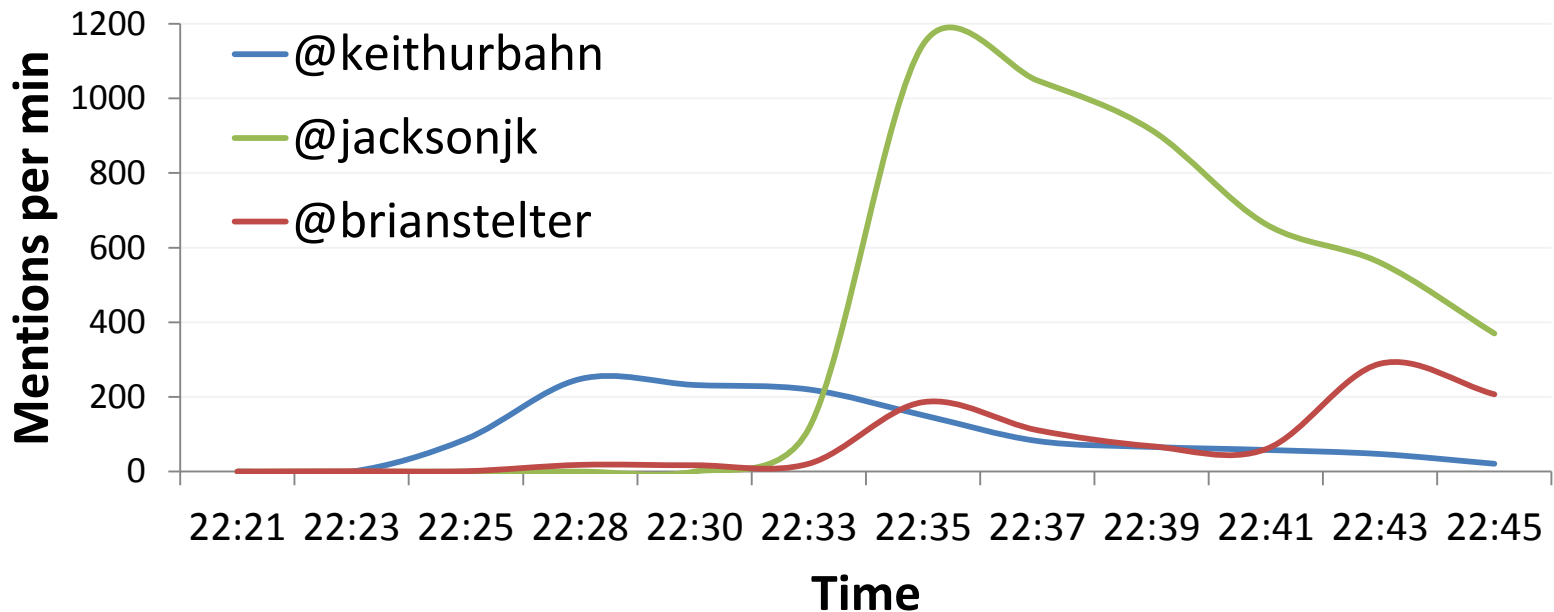
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/twitteroffice/5681263084>

News breakers

@jacksonjk: Jill Jackson – CBS News Capitol Hill producer

@keithurbahn: Keith Urbahn - Chief of staff of former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld

@brianstelter: Brian Stelter – New York Times reporter



News breakers



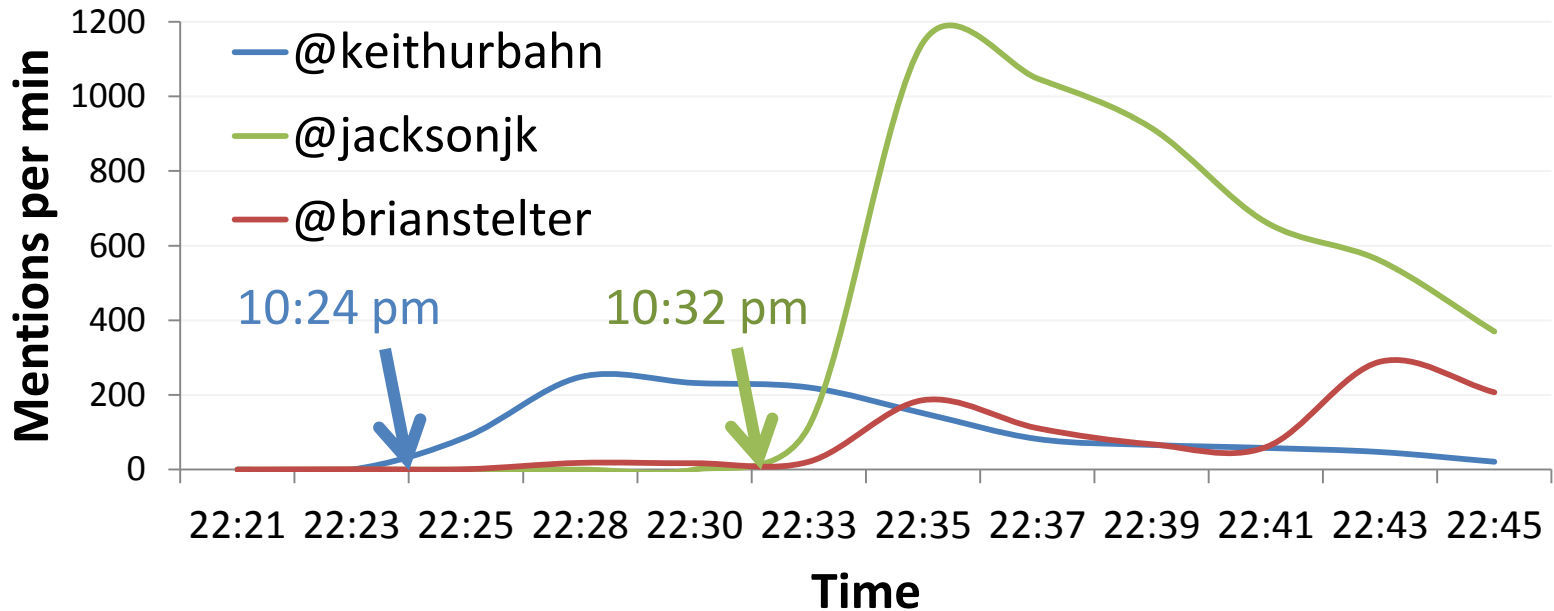
Keith Urbahn
@keithurbahn

So I'm told by a reputable person they have killed Osama Bin Laden. Hot damn.



Jill Jackson
@jacksonjk

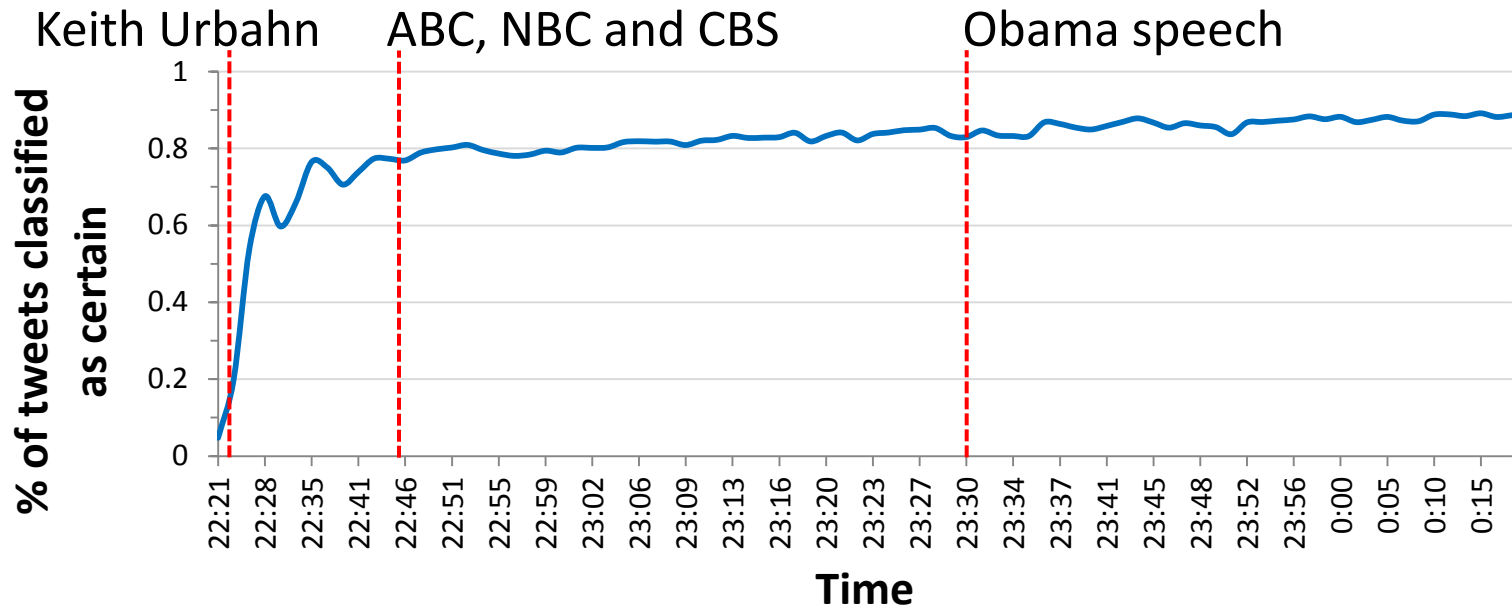
House Intelligence committee aide confirms that Osama Bin Laden is dead. U.S. has the body.



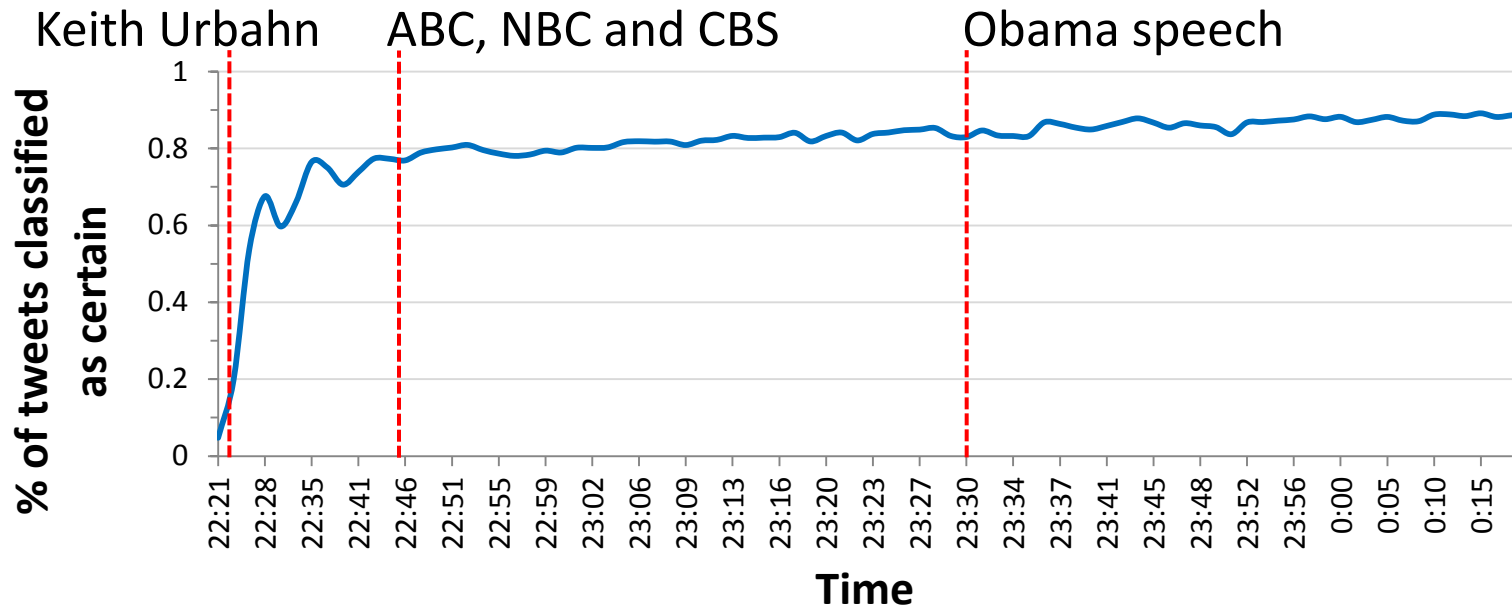
Did Twitter convince its audience?

- All English Tweets in data set: 420,134
- Certainty classification
 - Certain: *They caught Osama Bin Laden!*
 - Uncertain: *Rumor, Bin Laden dead. Don't know for sure.*
 - Irrelevant: *Obama: "the US is not – and never will be – at war with Islam...Bin Laden was not a Muslim leader; he was a mass murderer..."*
- Classifier
 - Training set: 300 tweets, 2 raters agreed on 235 (78.3%)
 - SVM with bag-of-words as features
 - Cross-validation: 75.8% overall confidence

Did Twitter convince its audience?



Did Twitter convince its audience?



29.91% tweets @keithurbahn contains “Rumsfeld”

18.61% tweets @jacksonjk contains “CBS”

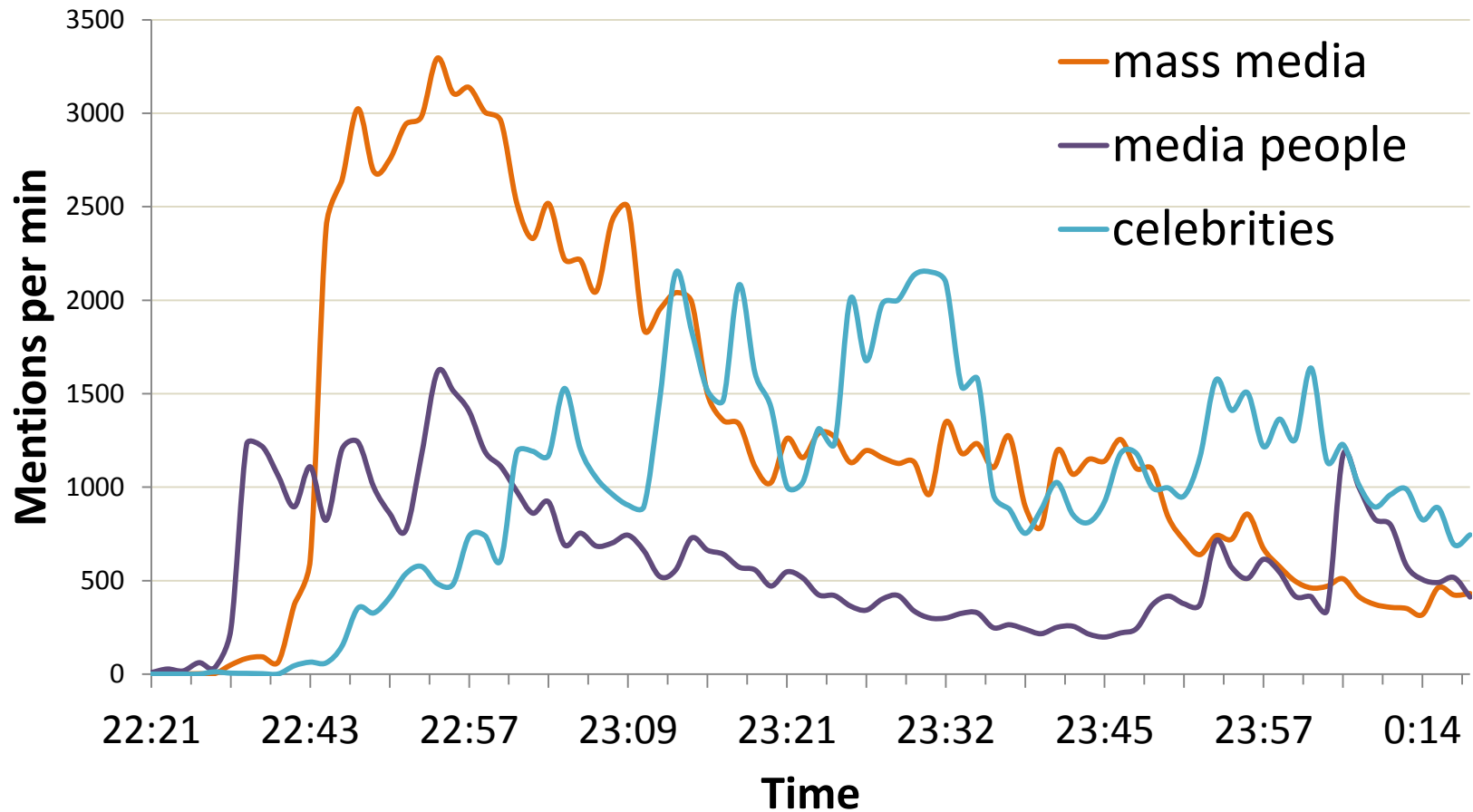
20.74% tweets @briansteler contains “NYT”

Who generated the buzz?

- 100 accounts mentioned in 18.10% of sampled tweets

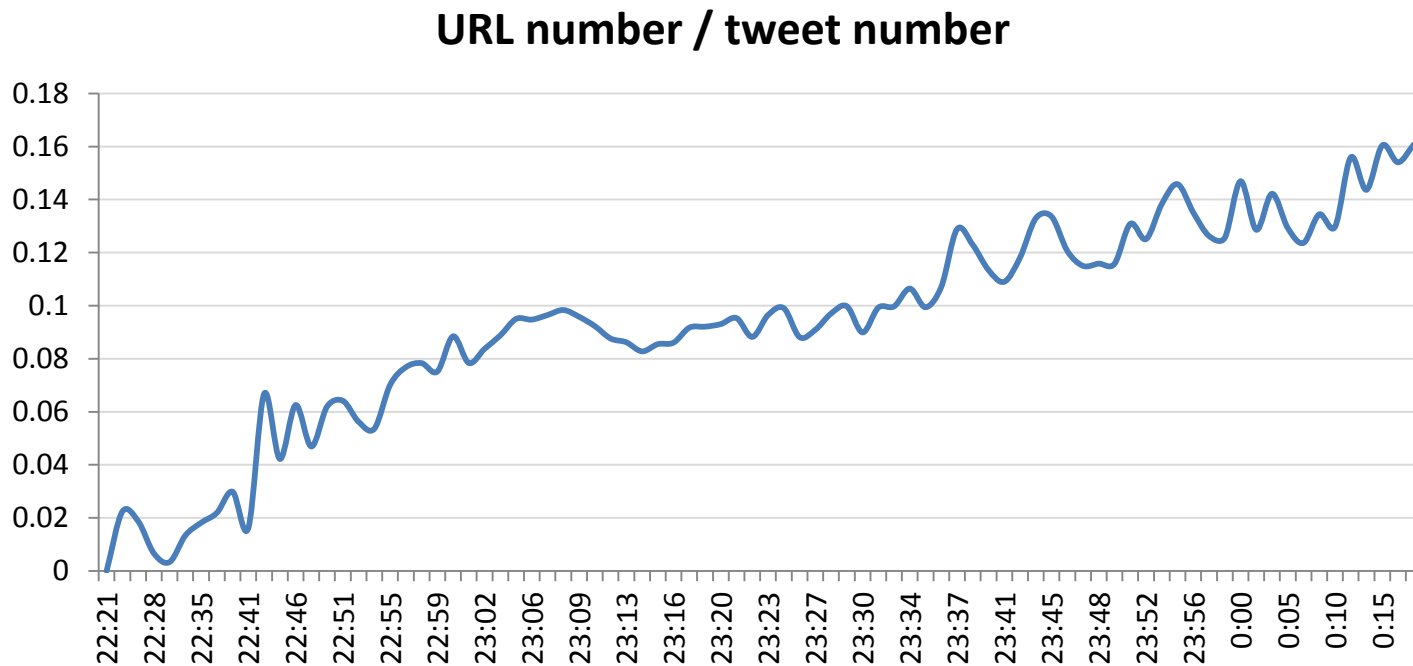
Mainstream media	26	@cnn, @nytimes, @cnnbrk
Media people	18	@jacksonjk, @brianstelcer
Twitter celebrities	16	@nzafro, @yourfavwhiteguy
Real-life celebrities	15	@stevemartintogo, @kimkardashianb
Blogs	6	@realmorte, @ugglytruth
Political people & org	4	@barackobama, @whitehouse
“Osama”, “Jesus”	4	@real_bin_laden, @osamabinladen
News aggregators	3	@breakingnews, @usabreakingnews
Others	5	@jtalarico328, @realliltunechii

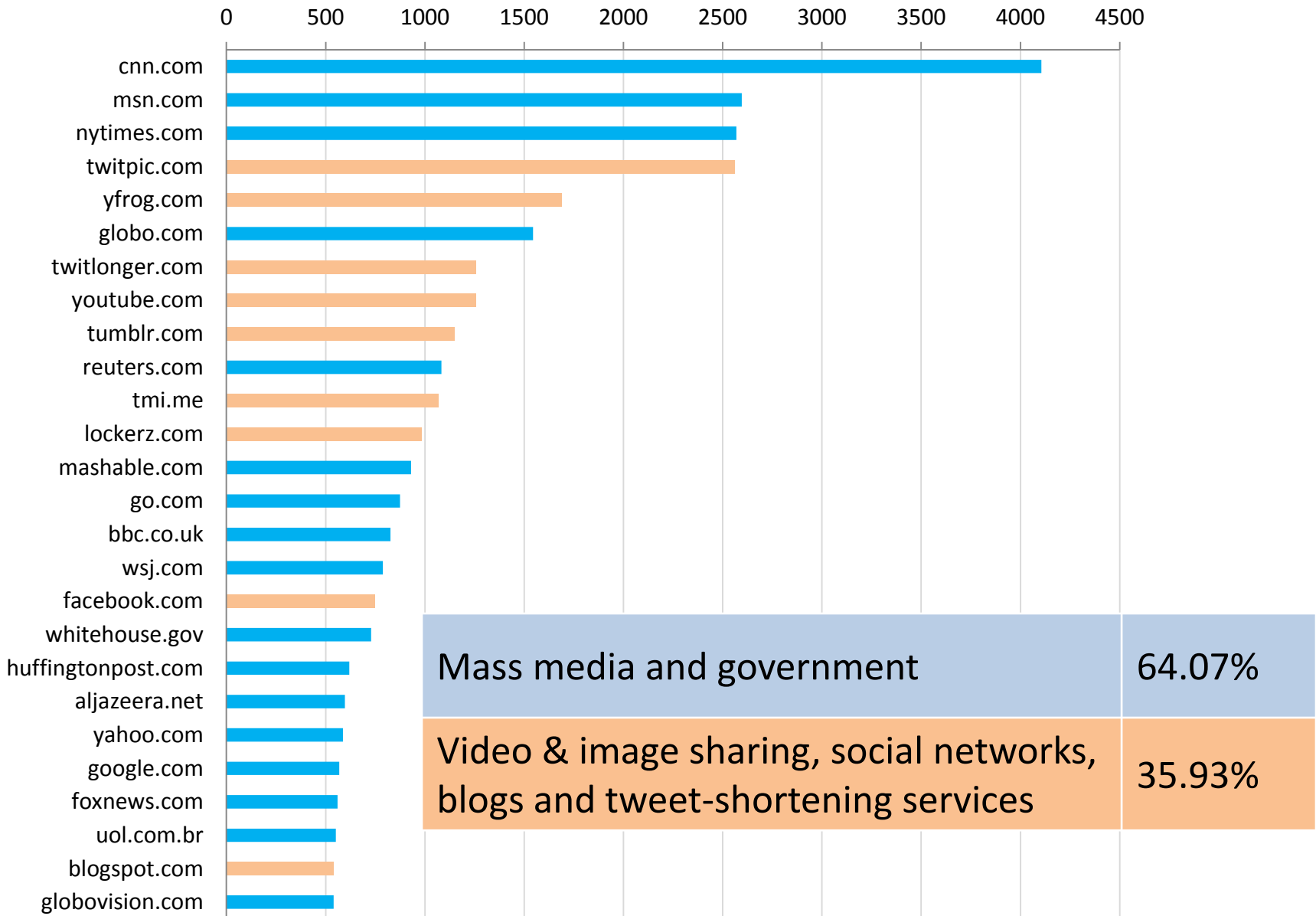
Who generated the buzz?



What did people share?

- 9.69% tweets contain links
- Top 26 sites made up 58.8% of total valid links





Discussion

- People are willing to trust information from social media – if the sources are credible
- Concentration of attention on “elite users”
- Different groups of elite users play different parts
- Journalists utilize personal social media accounts to “break” news

Associated Press Staff Scolded for Tweeting Too Quickly About OWS Arrests

The official rules note, "Don't break news that we haven't published, no matter the format." (**Reuters** spells out the same idea plainly in their handbook: "**Don't scoop the wire.**") Instead of getting "caught in the moment," the AP's freewheeling tweeters are urged in the e-mail to run "sensitive official AP business" through editors and corporate communications. The AP's social media guidelines were recently updated to insist, "**Retweets, like tweets, should not be written in a way that looks like you're expressing a personal opinion on the issues of the day.**"

<http://nymag.com/daily/intel/2011/11/ap-staff-scolded-for-tweeting-about-ows-arrests.html>

Breaking news guidance for BBC journalists

"But we've been clear that our first priority remains ensuring that important information reaches BBC colleagues, and thus all our audiences, as quickly as possible - and certainly **not after it reaches Twitter.**"

http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/theeditors/2012/02/twitter_guidelines_for_bbc_jou.html