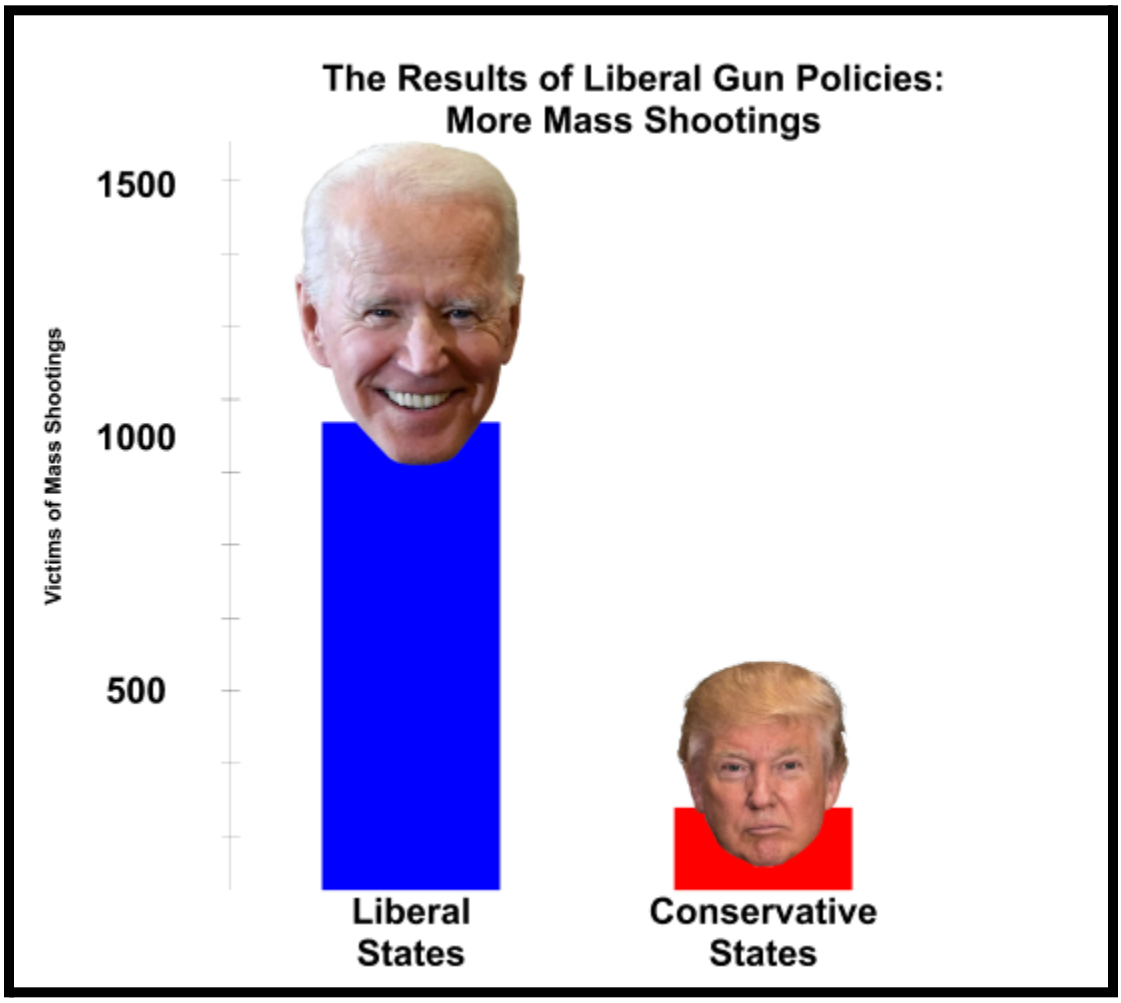
//DISCLAIMER: This visualization was created as part of a visualization ethics assignment. Please use the information presented here with caution, as it may have been intentionally designed to be misleading.

Black Hat Visualization



.BLACK_HAT_VISUALIZATION {

title: “The Results of Liberal Gun Policies: More Mass Shootings”;

desc: “This visualization takes data from the Mother Jones’ U.S. Mass Shootings dataset. Specifically, locations were categorized into which state they took place in. The states were then grouped by which presidential candidate won in the 2020 presidential election. The total_victims column was totalled for each category and presented here as a bar chart. The intended effect is to show that liberal policies result in more mass shootings than conservative policies.”;

design-motivation: “I made multiple attempts to divide the states into conservative and liberal in a way which would force a specific outcome: that liberal states would have more victims. I tried dividing based on Pew Research political ideology polls and by random internet sites’ opinions, but by using the 2020 election I could put more states in the liberal category (due to the Democrat victory) and weight the results that way. I used a bar chart because it is a familiar visualization and can be quickly glanced at, and this way viewers might not take the time to actually look into the facts (or lack thereof) presented in the chart. I additionally added the large pictures because they make the actual number for each bar unclear with their irregular shape. I also changed their sizes to increase perception of size differences and chose a cheery facial expression for Biden to hopefully incite an emotional reaction to seeing a happy face near grim data, whereas a more appropriate facial expression was chosen for Trump. The y-axis is also spaced unevenly and doesn’t start at zero and gives even more of an appearance of size difference. I included no link to further data, biases, or transparency about data manipulation. Finally, I chose a title which led to a specific conclusion that is not necessarily a valid one. Not only are populations wildly different between categories but presidential voting does not necessarily coincide with liberal gun policy. The title leads viewers to a specific predetermined conclusion. However, no data was fabricated and the visualization (even if confusing) is true to the data.”;

}

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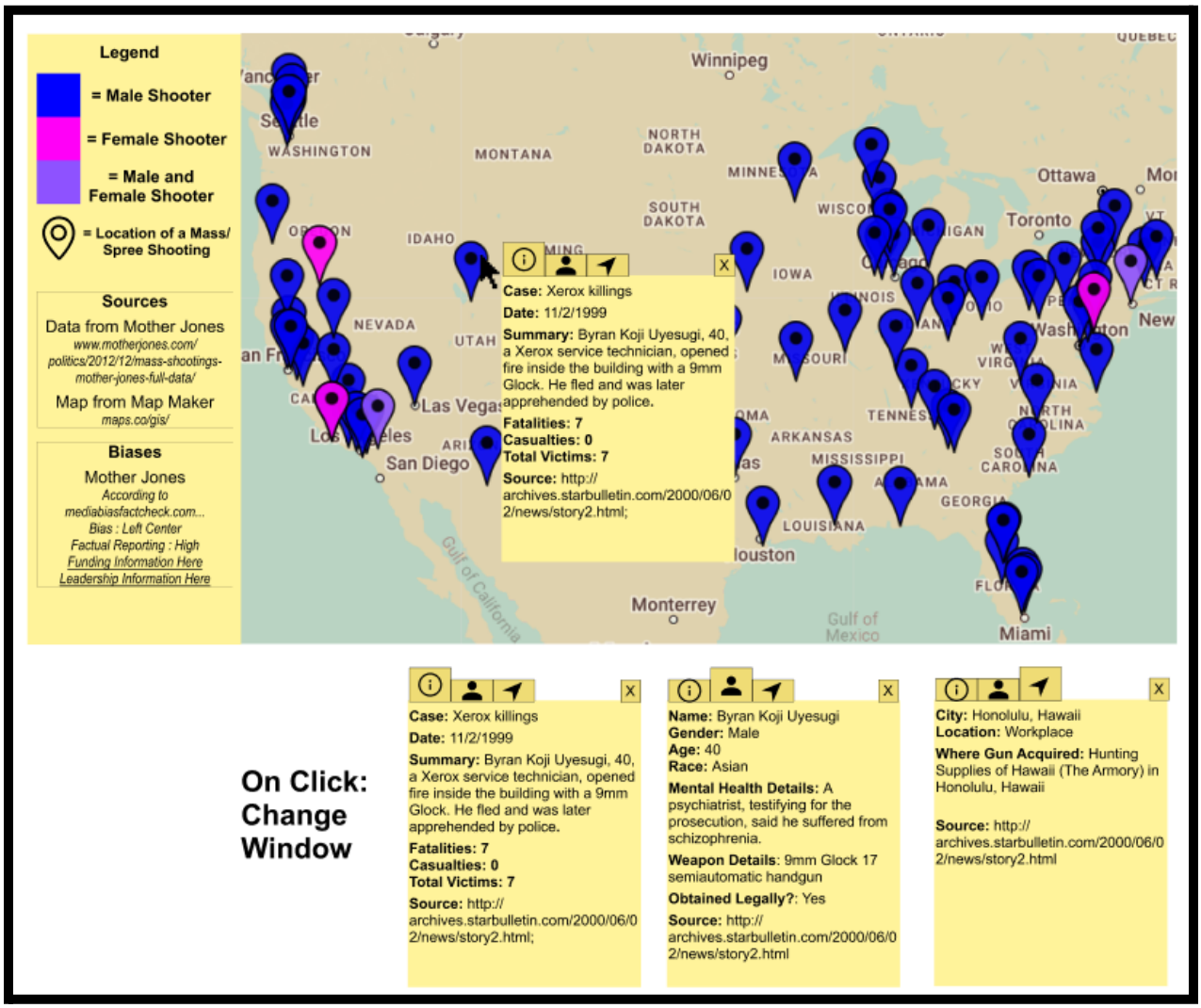
White Hat Visualization



.WHITE_HAT_VISUALIZATION {

title: “Mass/Spree Shootings in the USA from 1982 to 2019”;

desc: “This visualization takes data from the Mother Jones’ U.S. Mass Shootings dataset. On surface level the visualization shows the location (based on latitude and longitude) of mass/spree shootings from 1982 to 2019 and the gender of the perpetrator(s). Upon clicking on a pin a new window is brought up which gives further information on a variety of data relevant to the specific shooting. These are divided into three categories: “Shooting Event Details”, “Perpetrator Details“, and “Location Based Details.” The first category contains a description of the shooting, the date,

the name for the shooting, and the number of victims. Perpetrator details include all information about the shooter(s) and weapons; this includes the age, gender, race, mental health data leading up to and after the shooting, and details about the weapons and its acquisition. The final category includes the city, type of location, and where the gun was acquired if known. Finally, the left side has a legend and includes clickable links to show data origin and possible biases.";

design-motivation: "I wanted to primarily visualize the physical location of the shooting as well as the gender of the shooter, and so I used a map with pins (a visualization which has copious amounts of prior exposure for most readers) as well as traditional colors for gender to increase readability. This isn't necessarily the most accessible color palette but using other colors might lead to confusion due to how strong the correlations between these colors and gender are. Additionally, gender is included in the more information tab so the data is still accessible to those with color blindness. Under the key, I included an entire section for data sources and potential biases where I link to relevant sources for readers to validate or form their own conclusions from the data. The title is simply a description and leads to no specific conclusion. Further information about each shooting is available on clicking a pin which helps keep the visualization clean but allows for users to investigate further into specific cases as they choose. No data modification is done, and information is taken straight from the database linked in the sources section.";

}