CS 6474/CS 4803

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Week 4 | September 13, 2017
“Life itself is a dramatically enacted thing”

Irving Goffman

‘“The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life’ (1990).
What he meant was that:

- Life is a dramatic performance for us!
- We ‘perform’ for others.
- We present a kind of ‘act’ to them.
- We perform differently in different situations - and the world is our ‘stage.'
We present ‘ourselves’ in six different ways:

1. **Persona** – the different personality ‘masks’ we wear in different situations, for different people.

   For instance, the way we behave with our family on a picnic is different to how we would behave with prisoners if we worked as a Prison Warden.
(2) Performance:

- This refers to **how** we wear our persona or personality mask. For instance:
  - We might be ‘**sincere**’ in how we behave. We are honest in what we say and do.
  - Or
  - We might be ‘**cynical**’ – and not really believe in our performance.
(3) Staging:

- What do we need for our ‘performance’?
- A certain location.
- Props/objects.
- Costume/dress.
- These form the context for our performance.
- For instance, if you were to go for a job interview, you would wear formal/business attire.
(4) Teams:

• Who do we ‘perform’ with? Who forms part of our ‘team’?

• Who is there when we stage our performance?

• For instance, when we go to the club to ‘pull’, do we go with friends for confidence?

• For example, when we may adopt a ‘work persona’, when we work and communicate with others.
(5) Role:

- This refers to the individual ‘jobs’ or responsibilities we have in a ‘team’.
- We wake up as a son or daughter, within a family.
- We go downstairs and clear up last night’s mess (role as cleaner?) to help other family members.
- We act as a comforter to an upset friend on the bus. You then chat to other friends.
- We arrive at college and work hard as one of GT students!
(6) Personal Style:

• This is the **unique, individual** aspects of yourself you bring to teams, roles, persona and how you stage things!

• This is what makes you **different** to others.
The Presentation of Self in the Age of Social Media: Distinguishing Performances and Exhibitions Online

- Self-presentation can be split into performances, which take place in synchronous “situations,” and artifacts, which take place in asynchronous “exhibitions.”
- Introduces a theory of “lowest common denominator” culture employing the exhibitional approach
Why is Goffman’s theory valid and applicable to social computing platforms?
Hogan says: “A key difference in exhibitions is the virtual “curator” that manages and redistributes this digital content”. What would be examples of a virtual curator on Facebook?
Class Exercise 1

1) What are some examples of performance (Goffman) and exhibition (Hogan) in existing social computing platforms?

2) What are some design features in these platforms that enable (or hinder) “performance” or “exhibition”? 
Regulating Behavior in Online Communities
If social media participation is a performance and an exhibition, according to Hogan, why is there deviance, or the need to regulate behaviors in social computing platforms, per Kiesler et al.?
Regulating Online Behavior

- Different governance mechanisms of online communities:
  - Psychological: Encourage commitment; set clear norms.
  - Economic: Reputational currency/ratings.
  - Technical: filters; banning; reversion or moderation tools.
Class Exercise II

• What goals (if any) does the code articulate?
• Which, if any, design claims (from Kiesler et al.) does the code enact?
• What strengths and limitations do you see in this code? (Be prepared to explain these).
Antisocial Behavior in Online Discussion Communities
Trolls disrupt online discussions

SCIENCESCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

WHY WE'RE SHUTTING OFF OUR COMMENTS
STARTING TODAY, POPULARSCIENCE.COM WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT COMMENTS ON NEW ARTICLES. HERE'S WHY.
By Suzanne LaBarre  Posted September 24, 2013

engadget

We're turning comments off for a bit
by Joshua Topolsky I I February 2nd 2010 at 11:25 am

Kotaku

Pewdiepie Says Turning Off Comments Made Him Happier
Patricia Hernandez
Filed to: PEWDIEPIE  11/05/14 3:30pm

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Editorial: No comments. An experiment in elevating the conversation
Characterizing trolls in online discussion communities

1. How do trolls differ from non-trolls?
2. How do trolls change over time?
3. How do we predict troll-like behavior?
What data are we using?

- 18 months
- ~1.7M users
- ~40M posts
- ~100M votes
How do we define trolling?

Troll 😈
User banned in the future.

Non-troll (matched)
User who was never banned, but is similarly active.
A troll’s posts are deleted more
Prediction results on CNN

Bag of Words
- Post Deletion Rate (Manual): 0.70

Post Deletion Rate (Manual): 0.74

Our Approach (Automatic): 0.83

ROC AUC
#thyghgapp: Instagram Content Moderation and Lexical Variation in Pro-Eating Disorder Communities
collar bones

hip bones

thigh gap

Hungry to bed, hungry to rise, makes a girl a smaller size

That cookie’s not gonna seem like such a great goddam idea next time you’re standing in front of a mirror.
Concerns raised over Instagram after app allows users to see photos promoting anorexia

A leading charity has raised concerns over Instagram, the Facebook-owned photography app, after it appeared to allow the promotion of anorexia by allowing users to view pictures encouraging the eating disorder and self-harming.
But deviant behavior subverts attempts to intervene
Moderation was followed by increased social engagement

Next, we examined the volume of unique users associated with the root tags and their variants as well as the Jaccard similarity overlap of users between the two (Table 4). In general, there are some tag chains where there is considerable overlap of users between the root tags and adopters of their variants (e.g., "bulimia," "secretsociety"). However, most tag chains have little overlap (e.g., "ana," "thighgap"). We believe this shows a shift in users who adopt these variations to overcome moderation restrictions enforced by Instagram. It also implies that adoption of lexical variation in tag usage might be an intrinsic individual characteristic; that is, the users likely to embrace this strategy are perhaps a small fraction of those who use the root tags. Alternatively, it may also indicate the propensity of a certain segment of the pro-ED community to adopt the lexical variations in their content sharing, perhaps to avoid discoverability more broadly, build and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tag Chain</th>
<th>Root Users</th>
<th>Variant Users</th>
<th>Overlap (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ana</td>
<td>87575</td>
<td>2792</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anorexia</td>
<td>86631</td>
<td>57837</td>
<td>39.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anorexianervosa</td>
<td>5156</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bonespo</td>
<td>2107</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bulimia</td>
<td>49468</td>
<td>25758</td>
<td>36.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eatingdisorder</td>
<td>40605</td>
<td>9622</td>
<td>9.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mia</td>
<td>53880</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proana</td>
<td>2338</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proanorexia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probulimia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promia</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secretsociety</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>15215</td>
<td>65.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skinny</td>
<td>55639</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thighgap</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>5931</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thin</td>
<td>27386</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinspiration</td>
<td>2919</td>
<td>3534</td>
<td>17.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinspo</td>
<td>9304</td>
<td>9289</td>
<td>17.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Sizes of communities associated with the root tags, all variants, and their overlap. Downward arrows indicate tag chains where moderation reduces the users in the variant, whereas upward arrows indicate an increase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tag Chain</th>
<th>Mean (Root)</th>
<th>Mean (Variant)</th>
<th>z Stat.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eatingdisorder</td>
<td>53 ± 55.28</td>
<td>44 ± 72.87</td>
<td>-36.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mia</td>
<td>44 ± 46.37</td>
<td>56 ± 46.42</td>
<td>32.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thighgap</td>
<td>36 ± 39.02</td>
<td>52 ± 49.00</td>
<td>38.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinspiration</td>
<td>31 ± 26.35</td>
<td>58 ± 57.86</td>
<td>64.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinspo</td>
<td>33 ± 34.47</td>
<td>53 ± 50.58</td>
<td>87.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Engagement (likes, comments) on the roots and their variants. Tag chains with most significant change in mean likes and comments are shown. Statistical significance is tested based on Mann Whitney U tests. Bonferroni correction (α/17), where α = .05 (*), .01 (**), and .001 (**), is adopted to control for familywise error rate.
Results

- Banned tags show more lexical variation
- Traditional metrics of engagement (# of posts, comments, likes) in the pro-ED community higher after banning
  - Likes and comments higher, # of posts increases over time
- Posts becomes more negative, self-loathing, and have higher density of self-harm and triggering content

Instagram’s moderation strategies for pro-ED content don’t work.
Class Exercise III

Use Kiesler et al.’s design principles to recommend an alternative to banning bad behaviors. Use Instagram as the example platform.