CS 6474/CS 4803 Social Computing: Online Content Moderation

Munmun De Choudhury
munmund@gatech.edu
Week 8 | March 2, 2021
Christchurch shooting: Gunman Tarrant wanted to kill 'as many as possible'
THE LABORERS WHO KEEP DICK PICS AND BEHEADINGS OUT OF YOUR FACEBOOK FEED
Banning More Dangerous Organizations from Facebook in Myanmar

February 5, 2019
Deviance

• Behaviors that violate the norms of a group

• Sociological concept
  – Classically comes from Durkeim’s Anomie book

• Online content moderation and the connection to deviance
Deplatforming Trump Is Already Having a Huge Impact

A new report finds election misinformation online has fallen 73 percent since the president’s ban from Twitter.

MADISON PAULY
Reporter
Bio | Follow
The Fallacy of Deplatforming
Stringent moderation such as deplatforming works. But does it always?
#thyghgapp: Instagram content moderation and lexical variation in pro-eating disorder communities
Deviance and Normative Behavior

Variants/Tag Chain

Root

#thighgap

#thighgap

#thyghgap

#thighgapp

#thyghgapp

#thygap
Other examples where stringent content moderation and deplatforming didn’t help
Challenges of reliance on AI moderation tools

Does Transparency in Moderation Really Matter?: User Behavior After Content Removal Explanations on Reddit

SHAGUN JHAVER, Georgia Institute of Technology
AMY BRUCKMAN, Georgia Institute of Technology
ERIC GILBERT, University of Michigan

When posts are removed on a social media platform, users may or may not receive an explanation. What kinds of explanations are provided? Do those explanations matter? Using a sample of 32 million Reddit posts, we characterize the removal explanations that are provided to Redditors, and link them to measures of subsequent user behaviors—including future post submissions and future post removals. Adopting a topic modeling approach, we show that removal explanations often provide information that educate users about the social norms of the community, thereby (theoretically) preparing them to become a productive member. We build regression models that show evidence of removal explanations playing a role in future user activity. Most importantly, we show that offering explanations for content moderation reduces the odds of future post removals. Additionally, explanations provided by human moderators did not have a significant advantage over explanations provided by bots for reducing future post removals. We propose design solutions that can promote the efficient use of explanation mechanisms, reflecting on how automated moderation tools can contribute to this space. Overall, our findings suggest that removal explanations may be under-utilized in moderation practices, and it is potentially worthwhile for community managers to invest time and resources into providing them.

CCS Concepts: • Human-centered computing → Empirical studies in collaborative and social computing.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: content moderation; content regulation; platform governance; post
Platform Governance outside of the US
Decentralized platform governance
Algorithmic content moderation: Technical and political challenges in the automation of platform governance

Robert Gorwa, Reuben Binns, Christian Katzenbach

First Published February 28, 2020 | Research Article | https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951719897945

Abstract

As government pressure on major technology companies builds, both firms and legislators are searching for technical solutions to difficult platform governance puzzles such as hate speech and misinformation. Automated hash-matching and predictive machine learning tools – what we define here as algorithmic moderation systems – are increasingly being deployed to conduct content moderation at scale by major platforms for user-generated content such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. This article provides an accessible technical primer on how algorithmic moderation works; examines some of the existing automated tools used by major platforms to handle copyright infringement, terrorism and toxic speech; and identifies key political and ethical issues for these systems as the reliance on them grows. Recent events suggest that algorithmic moderation has become necessary to manage growing...
Class Exercise – alternative strategies for content moderation that does not involve outright banning or deplatforming