Building diverse social networks

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“Diversity”

1. Exists across a variety of dimensions
2. Shows from bottom to top
3. Requires actively working towards inclusion
A product of several factors

- Initial demographics
- Outreach
- Power vectors
- Software biases
Key properties

- Attitude and norms
- Community guidelines
- Privacy
- Pseudonymity
- Diverse initial team, power structure
- Muting, blocking, reporting
- Accessibility and internationalization
- Optional, flexible self-identification
- User rights
- Inclusive processes
Case Studies!
Facebook

- Attempting to be the representation of people online

- Lots of rule breaking at the margins due to the above issue

- Privacy and visibility as a linear gradient

- Arbitrary processes

★ Private / Secret groups
Twitter

- Sucks at dealing with abuse
- Very content focused

★ Private Accounts
- Priorities?

★ Driving force in identity expression
★ Xkit and content filtering
And ...

- Quora: rich-get-richer dynamics

- Puzzle Hunt: voting limited to founder’s network and “influentials”

- Hacker News: algorithms favor old Wikipedia posts over discussions of women-in-tech

- Google+: Nymwars

★ Ello: outspoken pro-pseudonymity
All of them

- Targeted bans on “offensive” content

- Become arbitrators of community disputes

- Who’s the power structure? Who gets the wealth that’s created? (Hint: almost all cis white guys)
Dreamwidth

- Explicitly prioritizes diversity
- Good privacy controls
- Diverse team, stakeholders, community
- Inclusive processes
Challenges and Solutions
Solutions

- Stop forcing people to identify with dropdowns
- Avoid creating rules that marginalize a community
- User controlled content warnings / blocking
- Awareness of community differences
- Nonlinear privacy and visibility
More challenges - and potential solutions

- People want a lot of functionality in their social network. Federation (or at least cooperation) between different efforts?
- Need to co-exist with Facebook et. al. Indieweb technologies?
- Existing open-source infrastructure often has usability issues, accessibility problems, questionable security. Develop new platforms?
- Economics. Ecosystem approach?
What we’re doing about it
Quirell

A social network being built by CollectQT, made to model QT relationships.

Coming soon!

Lynn Cyrin (she) @cyrin

queer trans computer femme, professional website maker

Lynn Cyrin (she)
2 days ago

making stuff work =^_^=

Lynn Cyrin (she)
2 days ago

kittens !!!!
Diversity (sitewide)

Gender, race, age, orientation, accessibility, national origin, appearance ... this tapestry is a place to discuss all of the dimensions of diversity.

More ...
Less ...

PINNED: Online diversity reading list
A collection of links ...
Like Aaree Disaaree 😊

how do I live the kind of life I want, weaving together the different threads? ▼