Best of LessWrong: May 2016

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1. [2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results](#)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results

Foreword:

As we wrap up the 2016 survey, I'd like to start by thanking everybody who took the time to fill it out. This year we had 3083 respondents, more than twice the number we had last year. (Source: http://lesswrong.com/lw/lhg/2014_survey_results/) This seems consistent with the hypothesis that the LW community hasn't declined in population so much as migrated into different communities. Being the *diaspora* survey I had expectations for more responses than usual, but twice as many was far beyond them.

Before we move on to the survey results, I feel obligated to put a few affairs in order in regards to what should be done next time. The copyright situation for the survey was ambiguous this year, and to prevent that from happening again I'm pleased to announce that this years survey questions will be released jointly by me and Scott Alexander as Creative Commons licensed content. We haven't finalized the details of this yet so expect it sometime this month.

I would also be remiss not to mention the large amount of feedback we received on the survey. Some of which led to actionable recommendations I'm going to preserve here for whoever does it next:

- Put free response form at the very end to suggest improvements/complain.

- Fix metaethics question in general, lots of options people felt were missing.

- Clean up definitions of political affilations in the short politics section.
  In particular, 'Communist' has an overly aggressive/negative definition.

- Possibly completely overhaul short politics section.

- Everywhere that a non-answer is taken as an answer should be changed so that
  non answer means what it ought to, no answer or opinion. "Absence of a signal
  should never be used as a signal." - Julian Bigelow, 1947

- Give a definition for the singularity on the question asking when you think it
  will occur.

- Ask if people are *currently* suffering from depression. Possibly add more
  probing questions on depression in general since the rates are so extraordinarily
  high.

- Include a link to what cisgender means on the gender question.

- Specify if the income question is before or after taxes.

- Add charity questions about time donated.

- Add "ineligible to vote" option to the voting question.

- Adding some way for those who are pregnant to indicate it on the number of children question would be nice. It might be onerous however so don't feel obligated. (Remember that it's more important to have a smooth survey than it is to catch every edge case.)

And read this thread: http://lesswrong.com/lw/nfk/lesswrong_2016_survey/, it's full of suggestions, corrections and criticism.

Without further ado,

Basic Results:

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Questions (PDF Format)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results (PDF Format, Missing 23 Responses)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results Complete (Text Format, Null Entries Included)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results Complete (Text Format, Null Entries Excluded)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results Complete (Text Format, Null Entries Included, 13 Responses Filtered, Percentages)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results Complete (Text Format, Null Entries Excluded, 13 Responses Filtered, Percentages)

2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Results Complete (HTML Format, Null Entries Excluded)

Our report system is currently on the fritz and isn't calculating numeric questions. If I'd known this earlier I'd have prepared the results for said questions ahead of time. Instead they'll be coming out later today or tomorrow. (EDIT: These results are now in the text format survey results.)

Philosophy and Community Issues At LessWrong's Peak (Write Ins)

Peak Philosophy Issues Write Ins (Part One)

Peak Philosophy Issues Write Ins (Part Two)

Peak Community Issues Write Ins (Part One)

Peak Community Issues Write Ins (Part Two)

Philosophy and Community Issues Now (Write Ins)

[Philosophy Issues Now Write Ins (Part One)](#)

[Philosophy Issues Now Write Ins (Part Two)](#)

[Community Issues Now Write Ins (Part One)](#)

[Community Issues Now Write Ins (Part Two)](#)

Rejoin Conditions

[Rejoin Condition Write Ins (Part One)](#)

[Rejoin Condition Write Ins (Part Two)](#)

[Rejoin Condition Write Ins (Part Three)](#)

[Rejoin Condition Write Ins (Part Four)](#)

[Rejoin Condition Write Ins (Part Five)](#)

CC-Licensed Machine Readable Survey and Public Data

[2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Structure](#) ([License](#))

[2016 LessWrong Diaspora Survey Public Dataset](#)

(Note for people looking to work with the dataset: My survey analysis code [repository](#) includes a sqlite converter, examples, and more coming soon. It's a great way to get up and running with the dataset really quickly.)

In depth analysis:

Analysis Posts

[Part One: Meta and Demographics](#)

[Part Two: LessWrong Use, Successorship, Diaspora](#)

Aggregated Data

More coming soon!

Some notes:

1. FortForecast on the communities section, Bayesed And Confused on the blogs section, and Synthesis on the stories section were all 'troll' answers designed to catch people who just put down everything. Somebody noted that the three 'fortforecast' users had the entire DSM split up between them, that's why.

2. Lots of people asked me for a list of all those cool blogs and stories and communities on the survey, they're included in the survey questions PDF above.

Public TODO:

1. Add more in depth analysis, fix the ones that decided to suddenly break at the last minute or I suspect were always broken.

2. Add a compatibility mode so that the current question codes are converted to older ones for 3rd party analysis that rely on them.

If anybody would like to help with these, write to jd@fortforecast.com