

Investigating How Gilds Were Employed On Reddit

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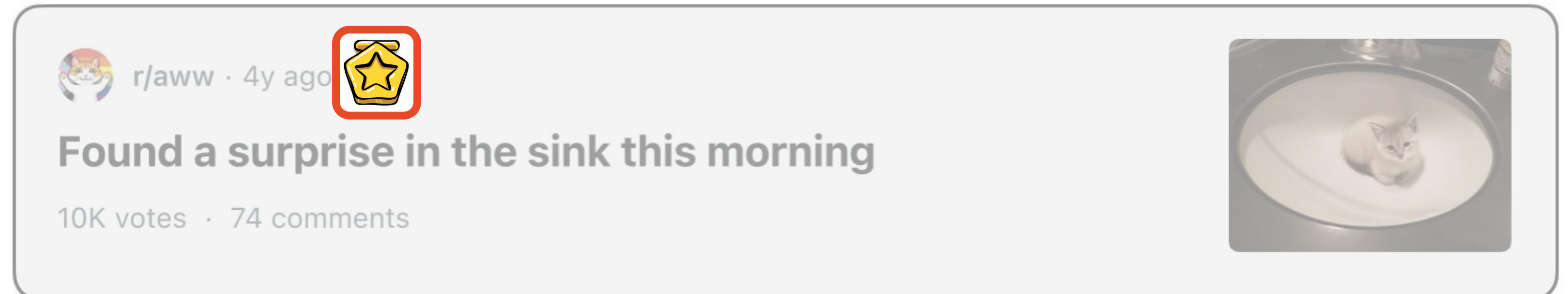


Motivation and Research Questions

Reddit has recently made efforts to reinvent its design of **positive feedback**.

Many of these forms of feedback, including **gilds**, are being used by moderators as a way to positively reinforce desirable behavior.

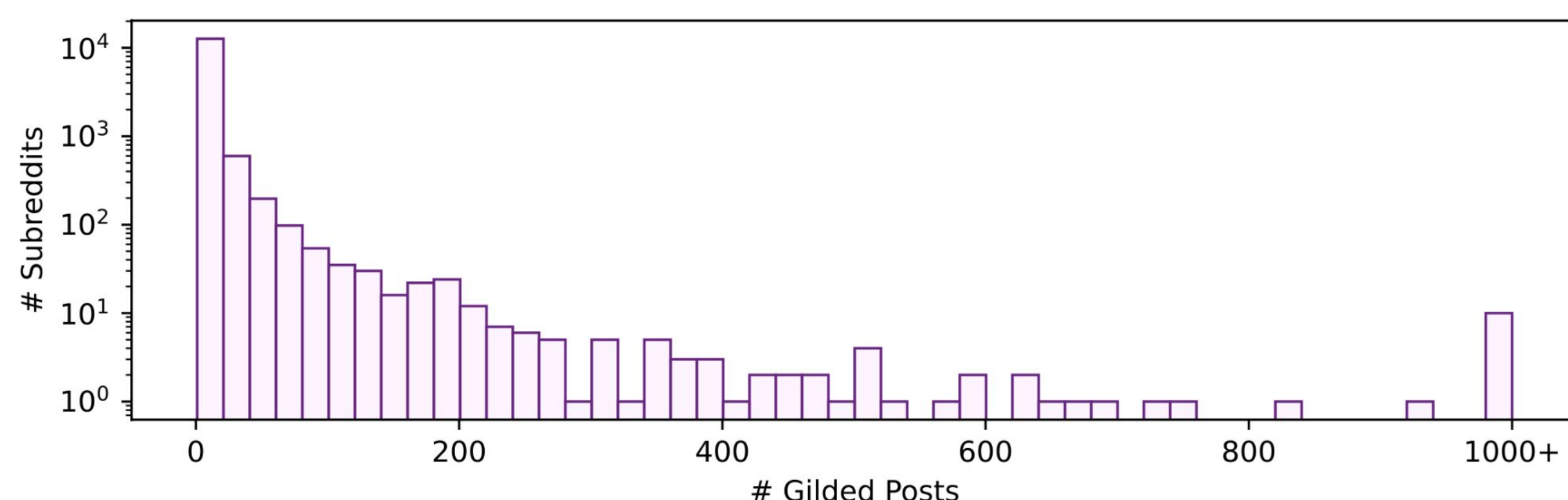
We do not currently know **what types** of posts are being awarded positive feedback such as gilds.



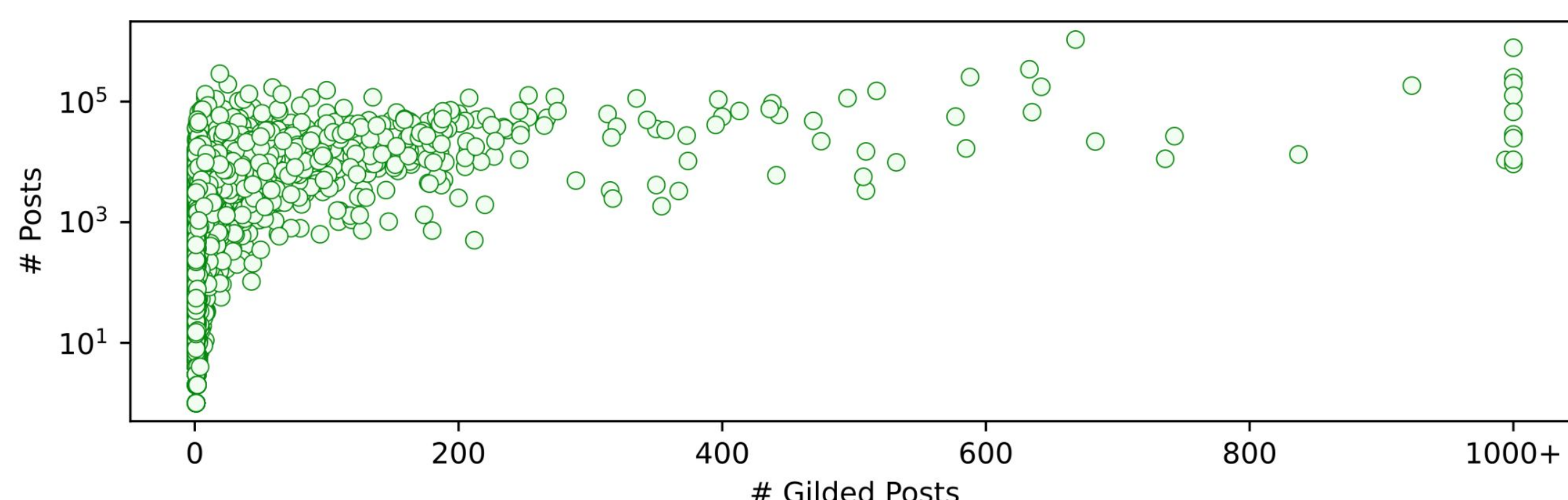
Example post from r/aww that received a **gild**, an feature allowing users to pay to award to posts and comments, represented as a small gold icon above the post title.

RQ1: How often did Reddit communities give out gilds?

Dataset: 64M Reddit posts between May 1, 2020 and September 30, 2020 from all subreddits.



(a) distribution of the # of gilded posts across subreddits



(b) # of gilded posts compared against the total number of posts

Gilds were used by a **small percentage of subreddits** (1.3%) and in those communities, they most often **gilded one post per month**.

Some communities, however, **gilded up to 20%** of their posts in our dataset.

Gilds, while rare overall, were important to many Reddit communities and deserve further analysis.

RQ2: What types of content received gilds in Reddit communities?

Methods

- Match gilded posts with similar non-gilded posts through **stratified propensity score matching**.
- Two-sided independent t-tests to compare the text of gilded and non-gilded posts on prosocial/toxicity metrics.

Findings

- **Gilded posts** are significantly **more prosocial** (measured by gratitude, politeness, support, and agreement).
- **Non-gilded posts** are significantly **more toxic** on average than gilded posts.

Next Steps

- Develop additional metrics to capture what kinds of posts are receiving positive feedback **across communities**.
- Explore **causal effects** of receiving positive feedback.



[Read full write-up here!](#)