Content Moderation in Presence of Fringe Platforms

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ENTER Jamboree

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Motivation

- Increased interest in **online** hateful/extreme/**unsafe content**:
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  - e.g. bullying, food disorders…

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~ 6% of the US citizens use fringe platforms: Parler, Truth…

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while **allowing** for **Migration*** to a **fringe** platform

➡ How **migration** is affected by content moderation **policies**

➡ How **unsafe content** is affected by **migration**

➡ What **incentives** do platforms have to **self-regulate**

➡ Characterize the **optimal regulation** to **minimize** unsafe content

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- **Endogenous composition** ~ migration
  - Users' trade-off: network size, quality, (un)safe content
  - Moderated platform's trade-off: participation, unsafe content

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2. **Policy:**
   - **Incentives misalignment** b/ platform & regulator (min unsafe content)
   - Imposing a **minimal** content moderation intensity (policy):
     i. Only useful with small network effects (or high competition)
     ii. Otherwise, always **superfluous** (not binding)

Roadmap

I. Model
   - Equilibrium

II. Policy Discussion

III. Extensions
   - Multihoming
   - Radicalization & Offline Violence

THEORY

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…platform (2) just exists with $K_2 = 1$

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3. Agents derive the corresponding payoffs from the composition of the social network

Threshold Equilibrium (for given K)

User i joins platform (1) iff $\theta_i < t^*$, otherwise, they join (2)

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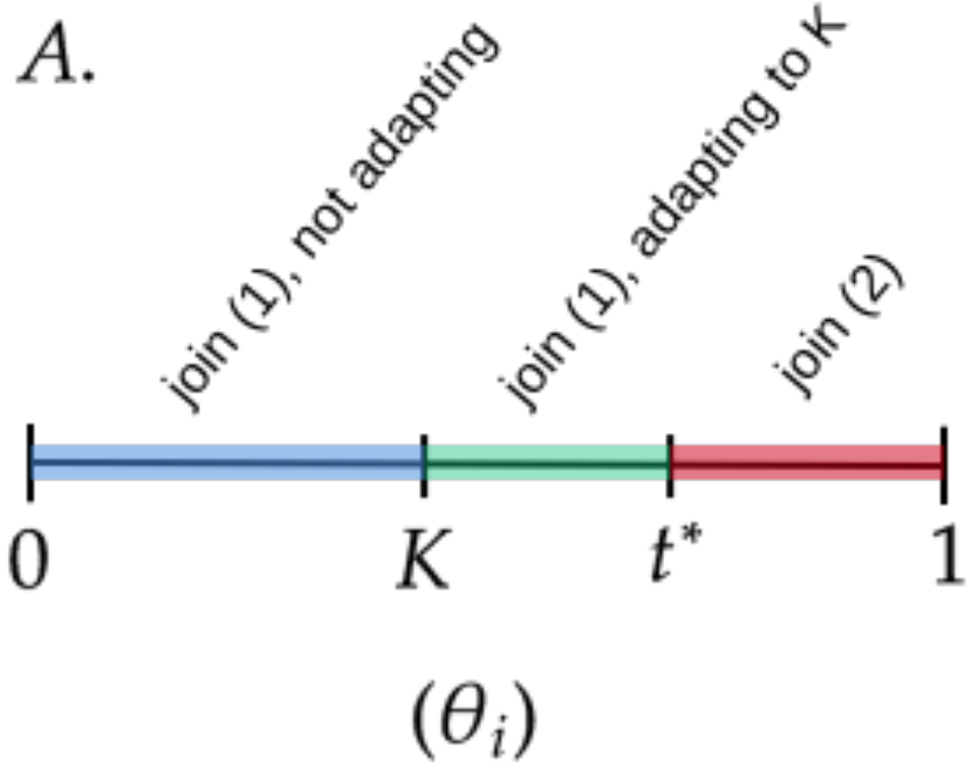
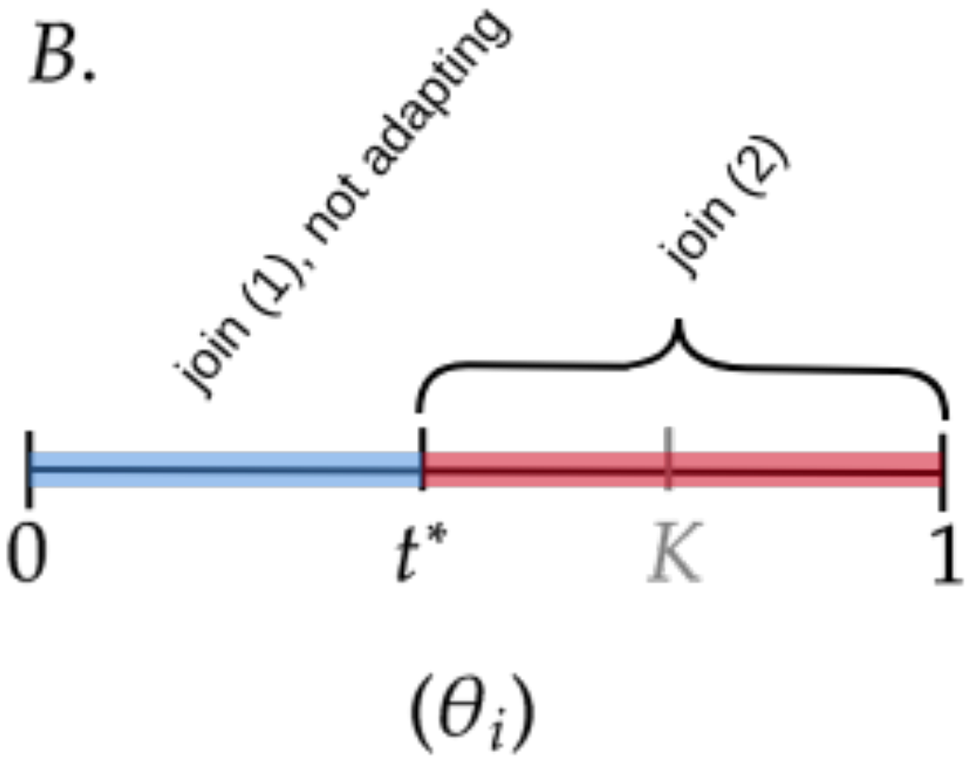


High K (lenient policy)



K=0, very strict content moderation
K=1, no content moderation

Characterization of the Equilibrium

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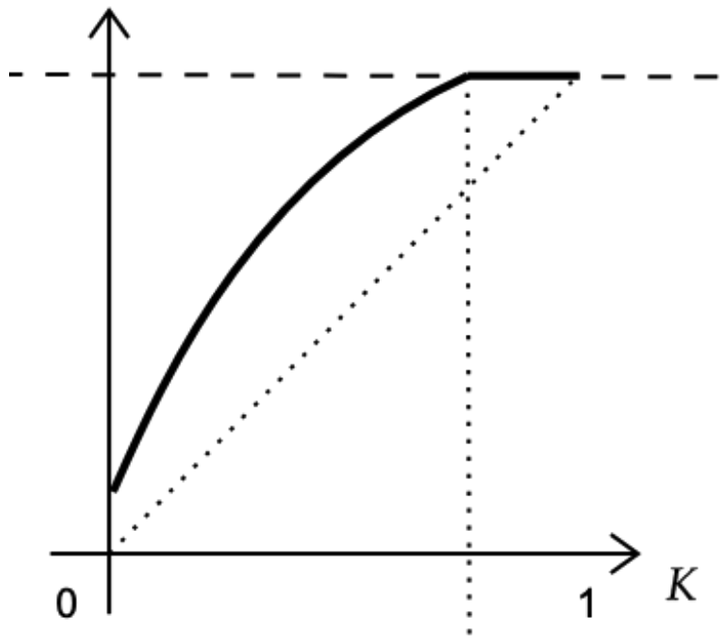
(threshold)



$\uparrow \alpha, \uparrow \Delta$

~ more attractive moderated platform (market could tip!)

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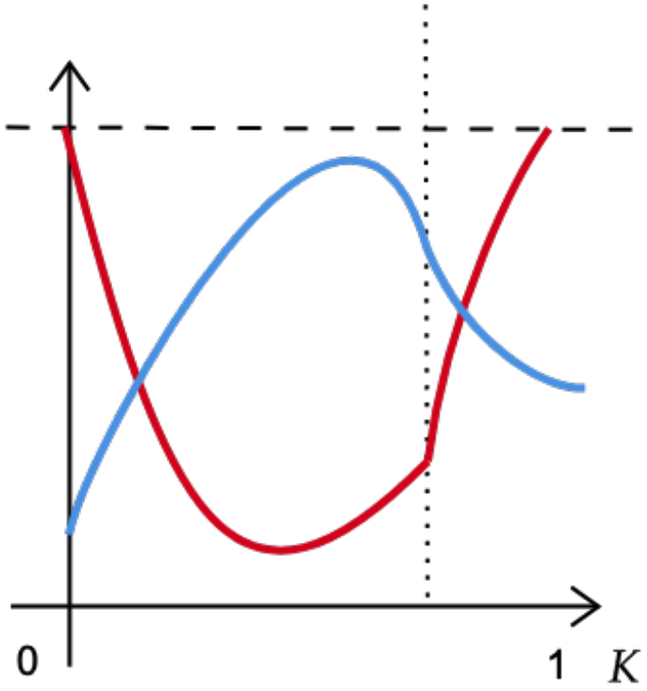
Content moderation affects participation more with high network effects

Platform's profit
Total unsafety Level



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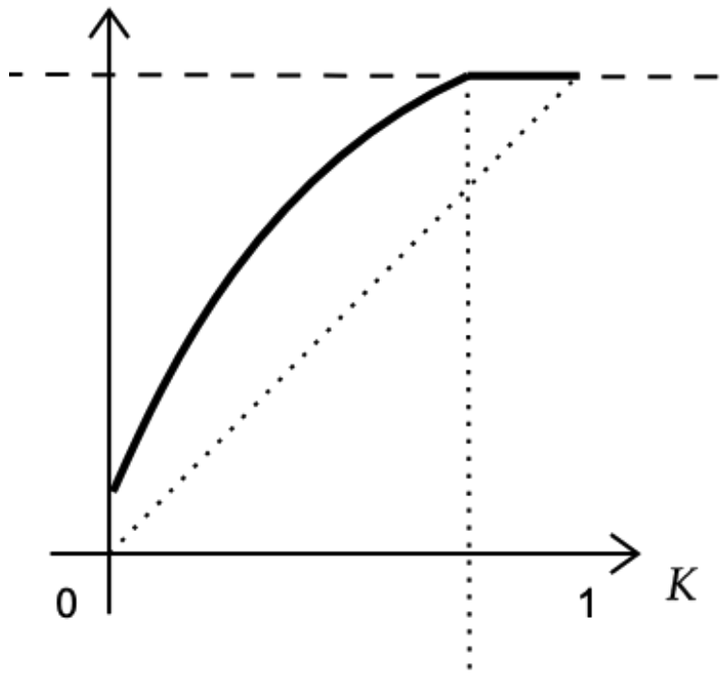

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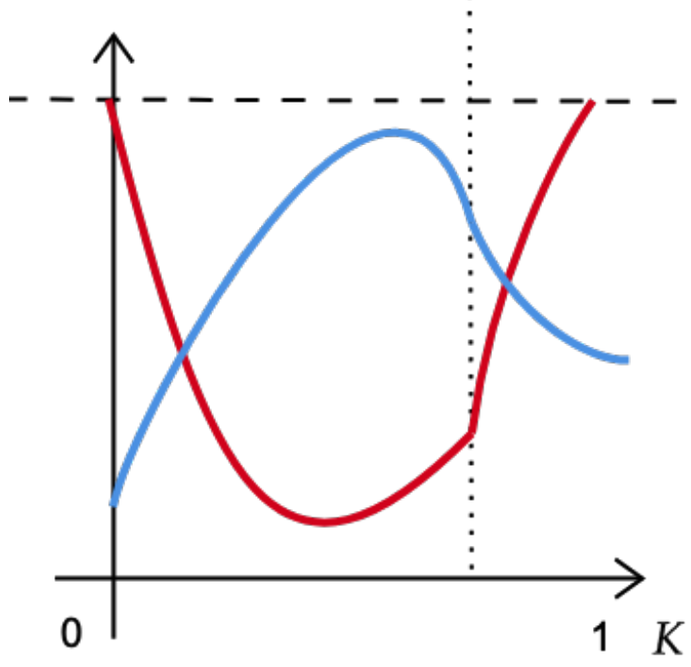

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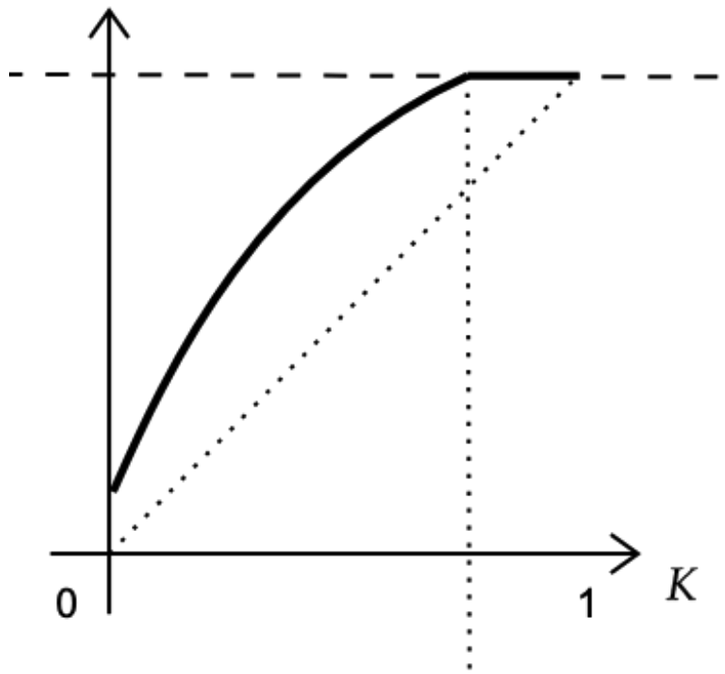

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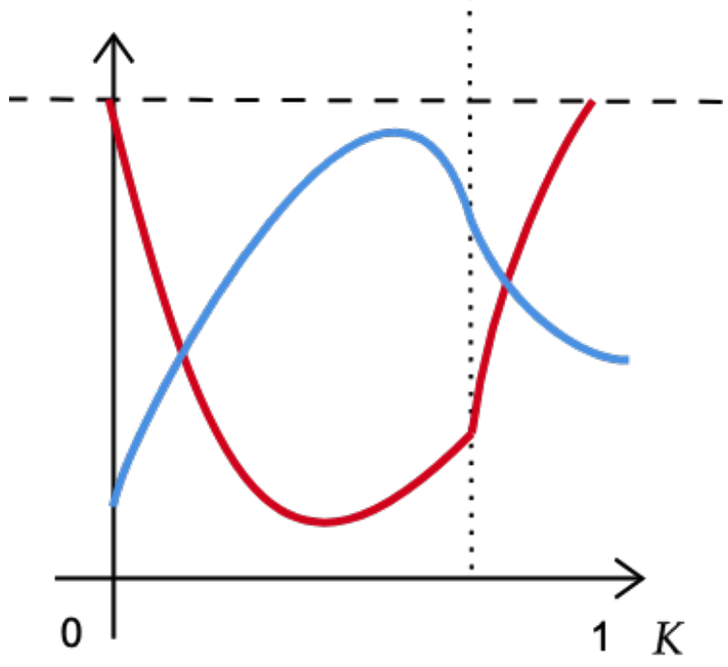

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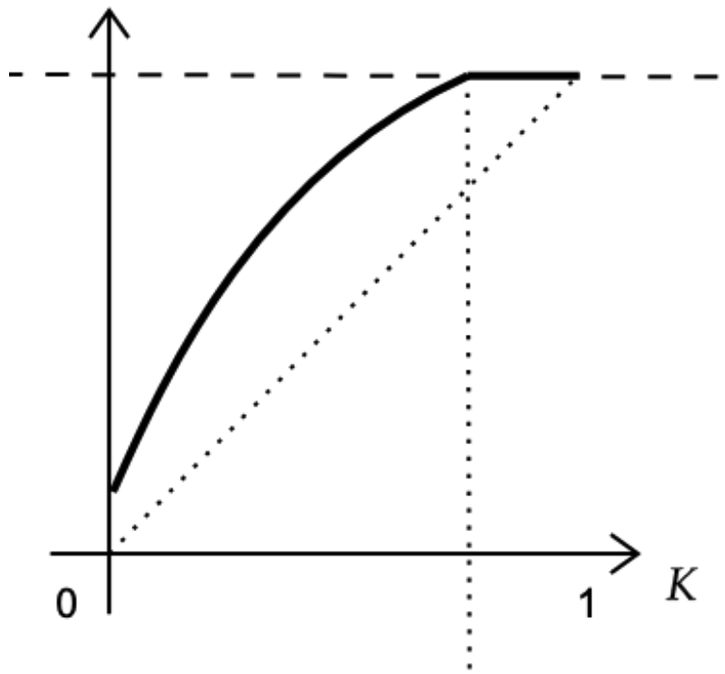

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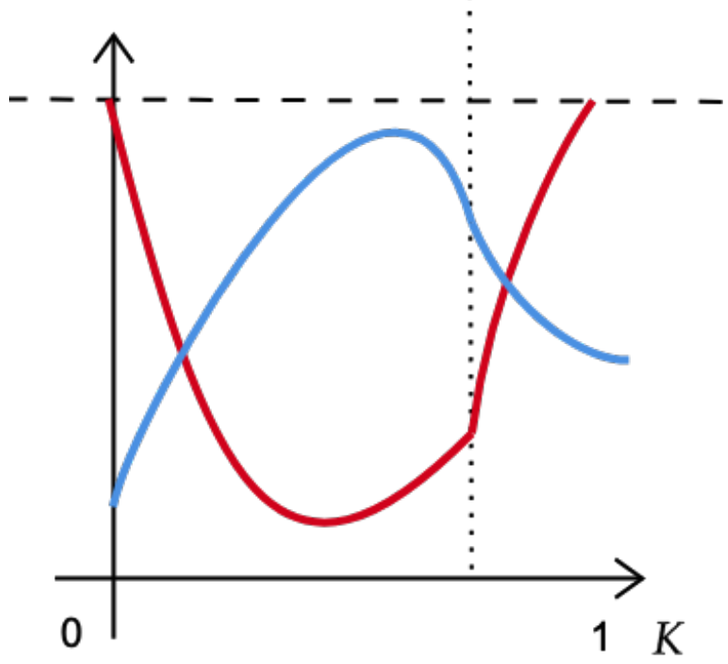

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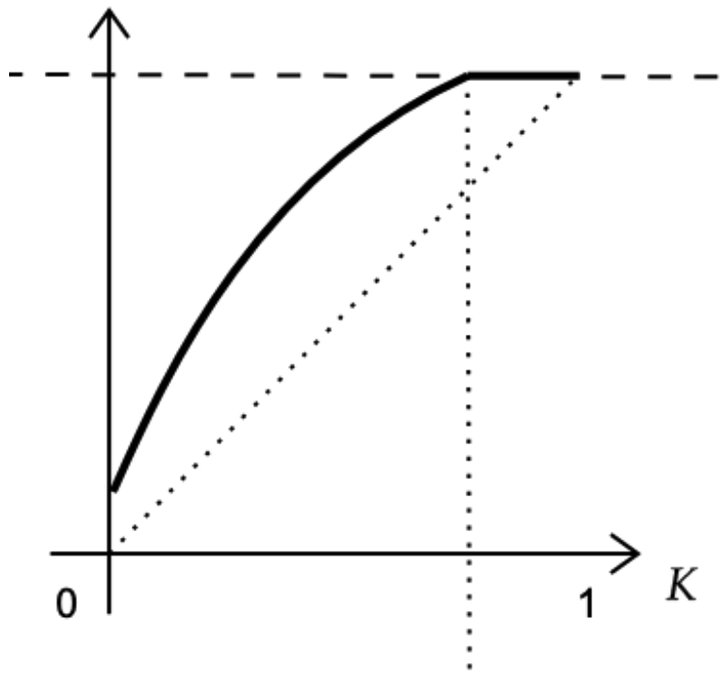

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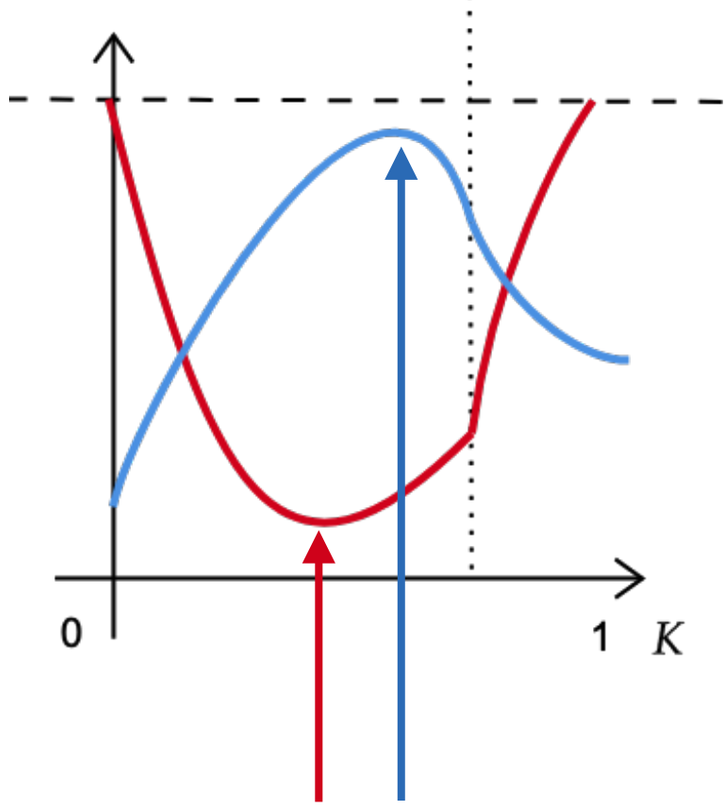

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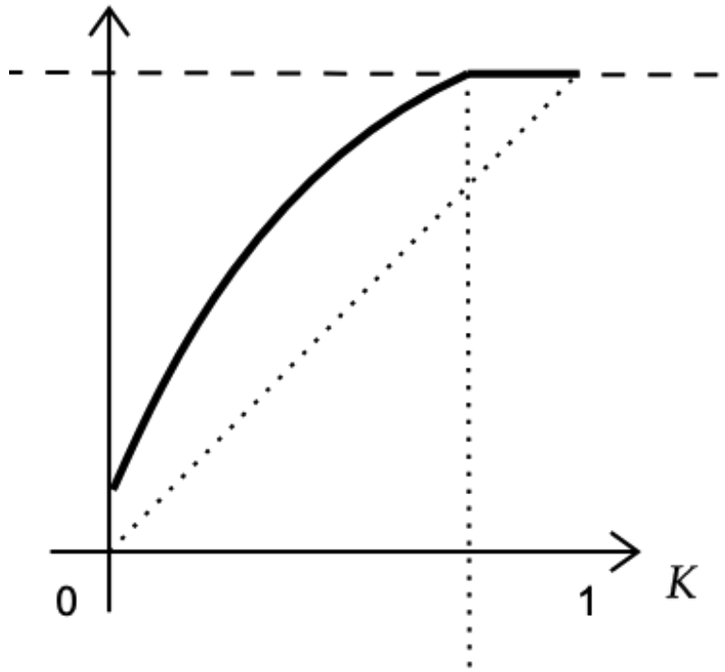

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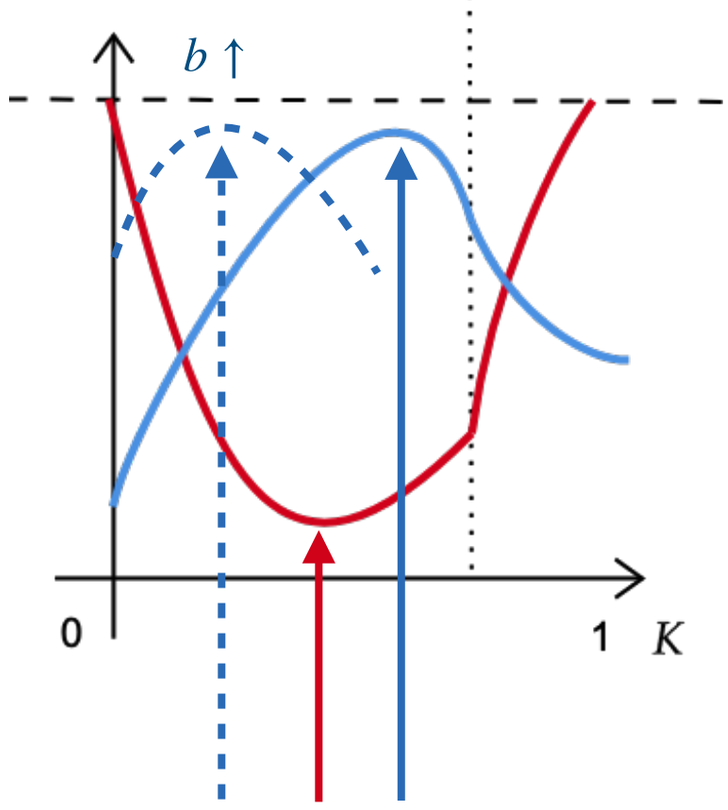

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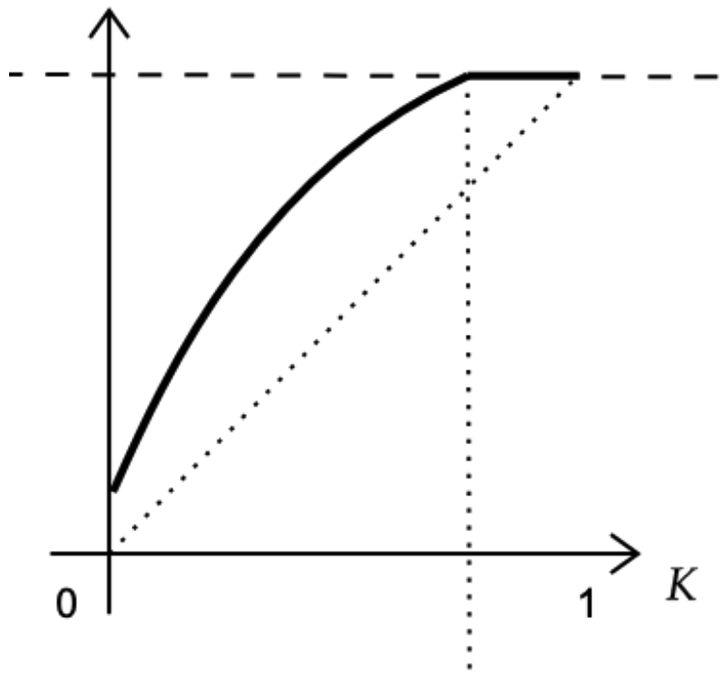

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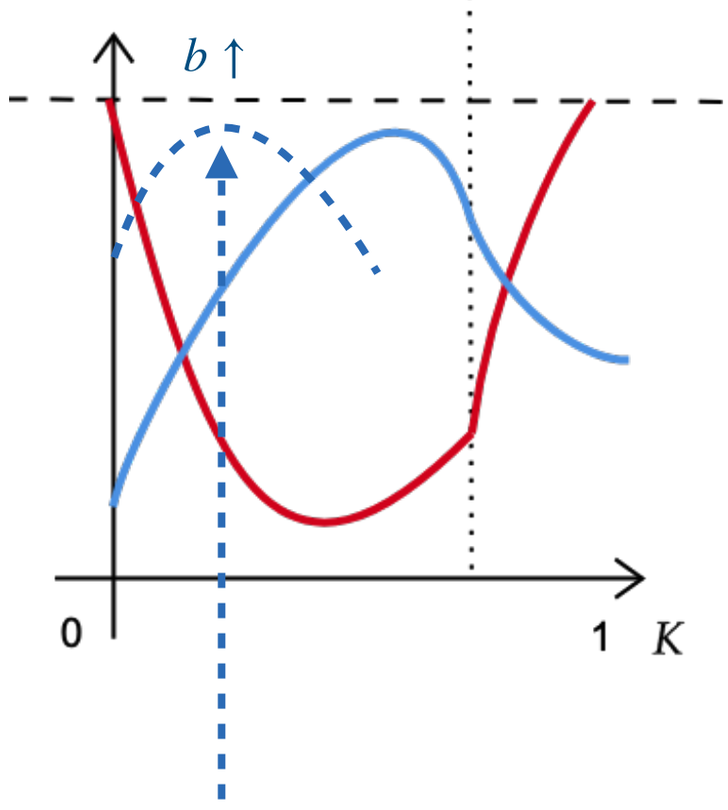

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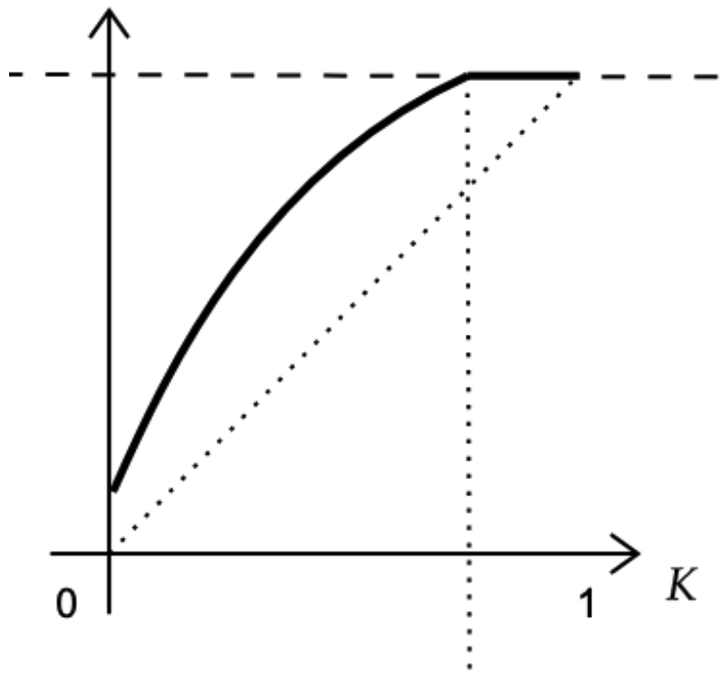

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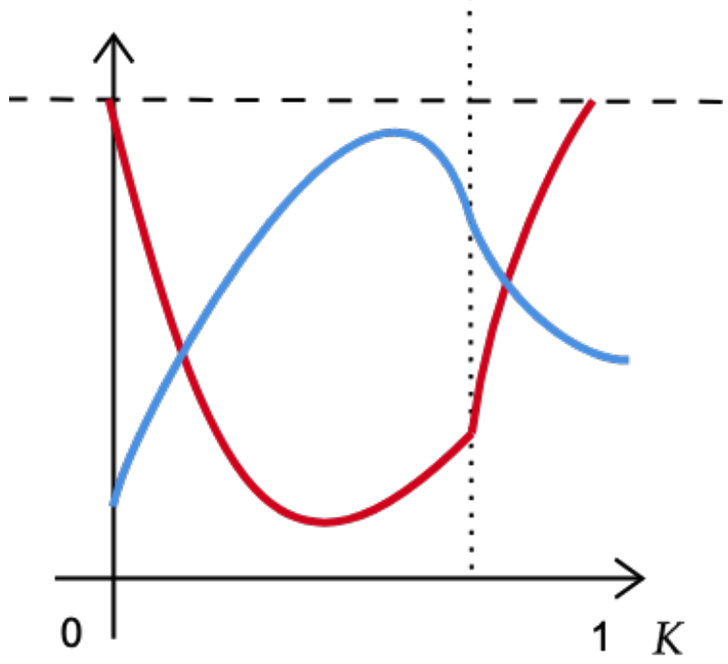

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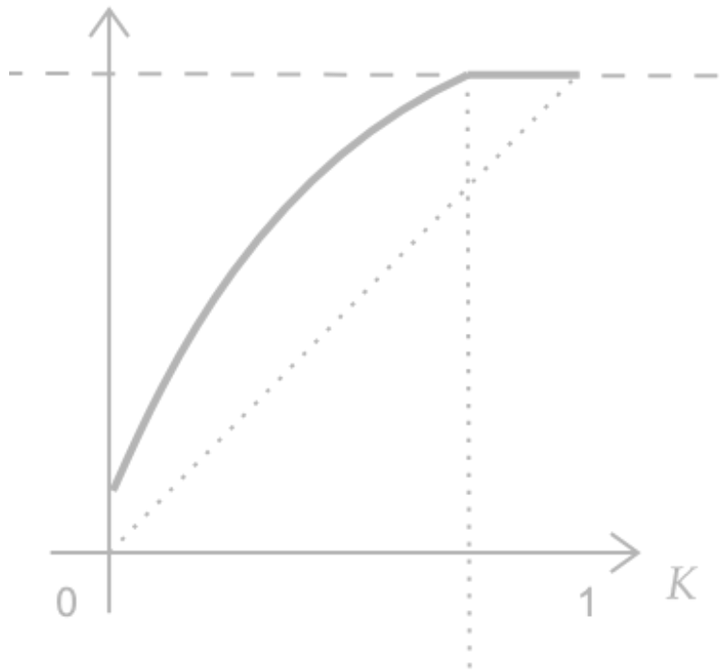

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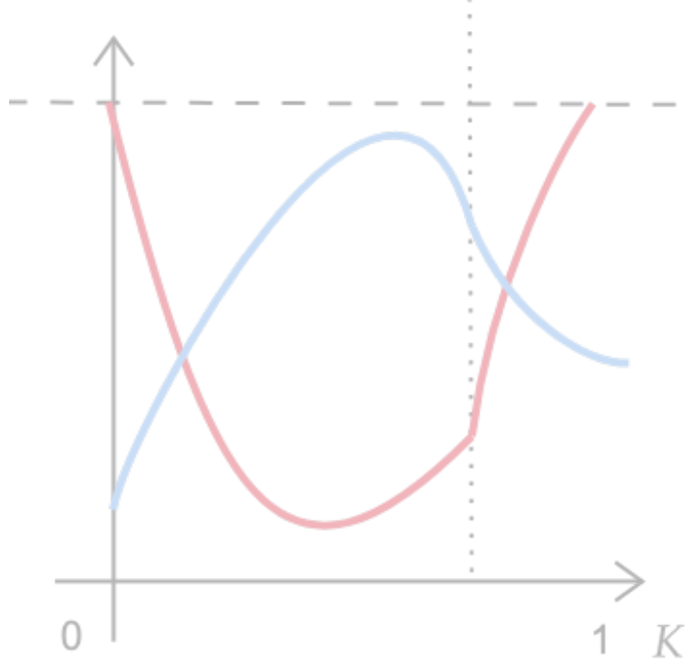

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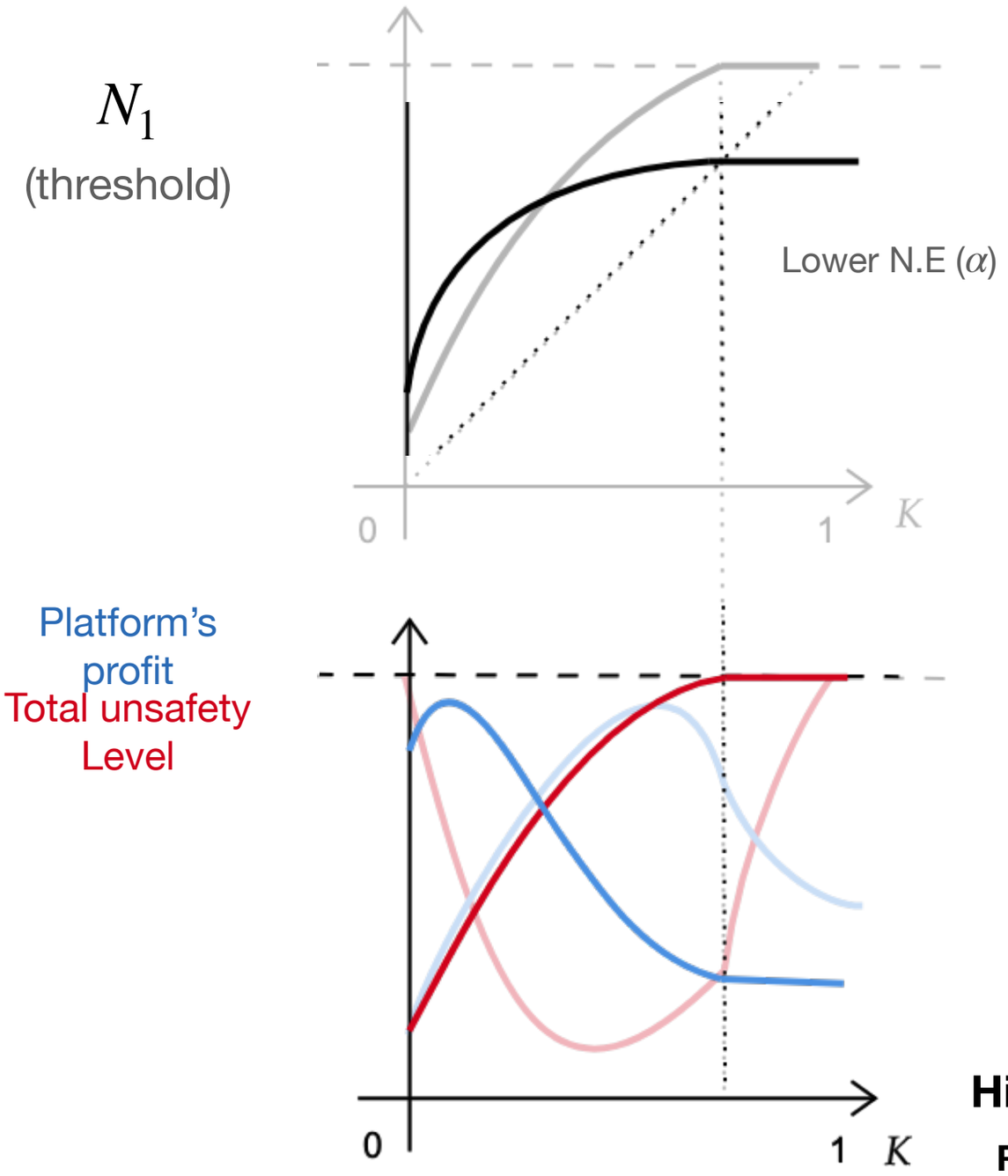

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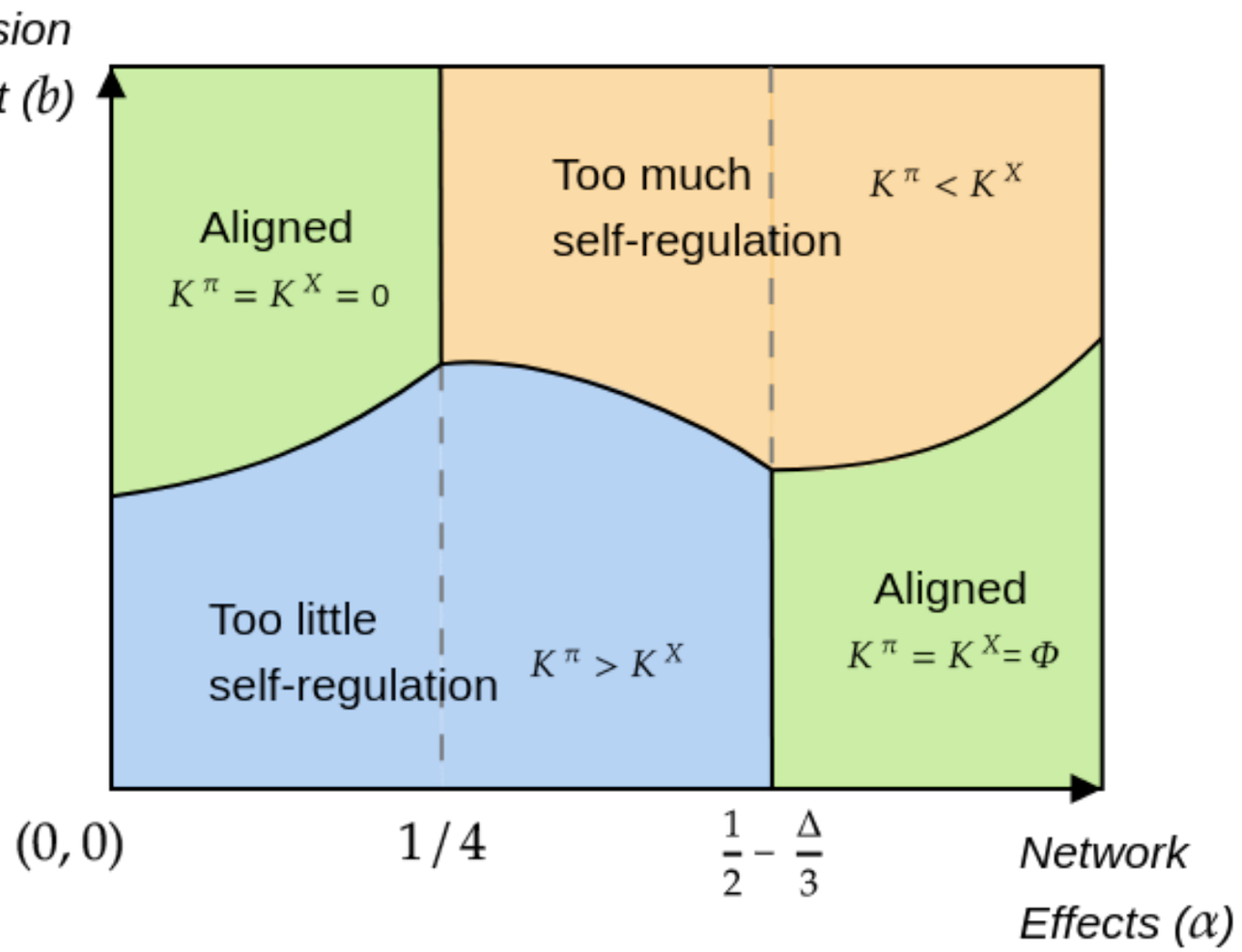

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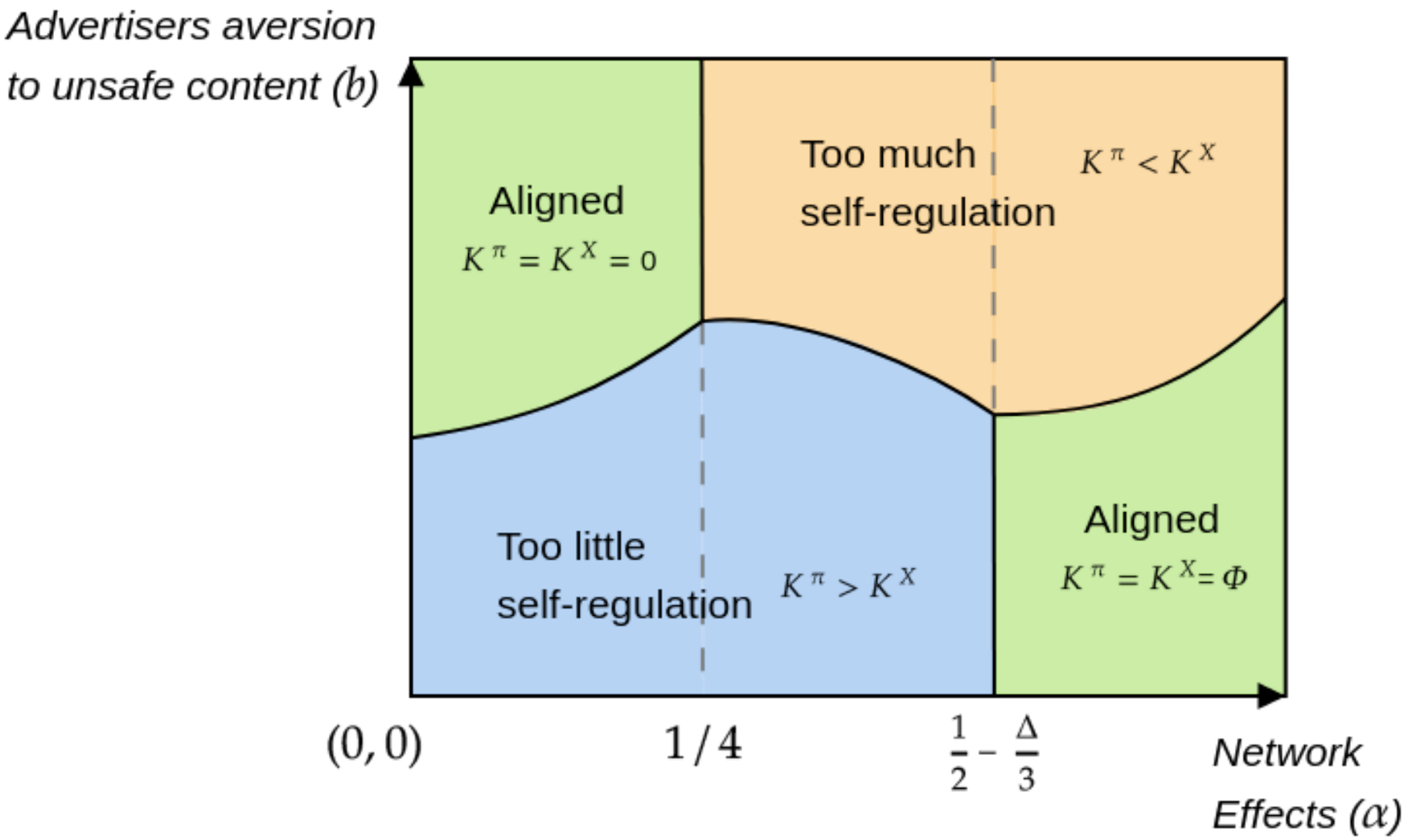

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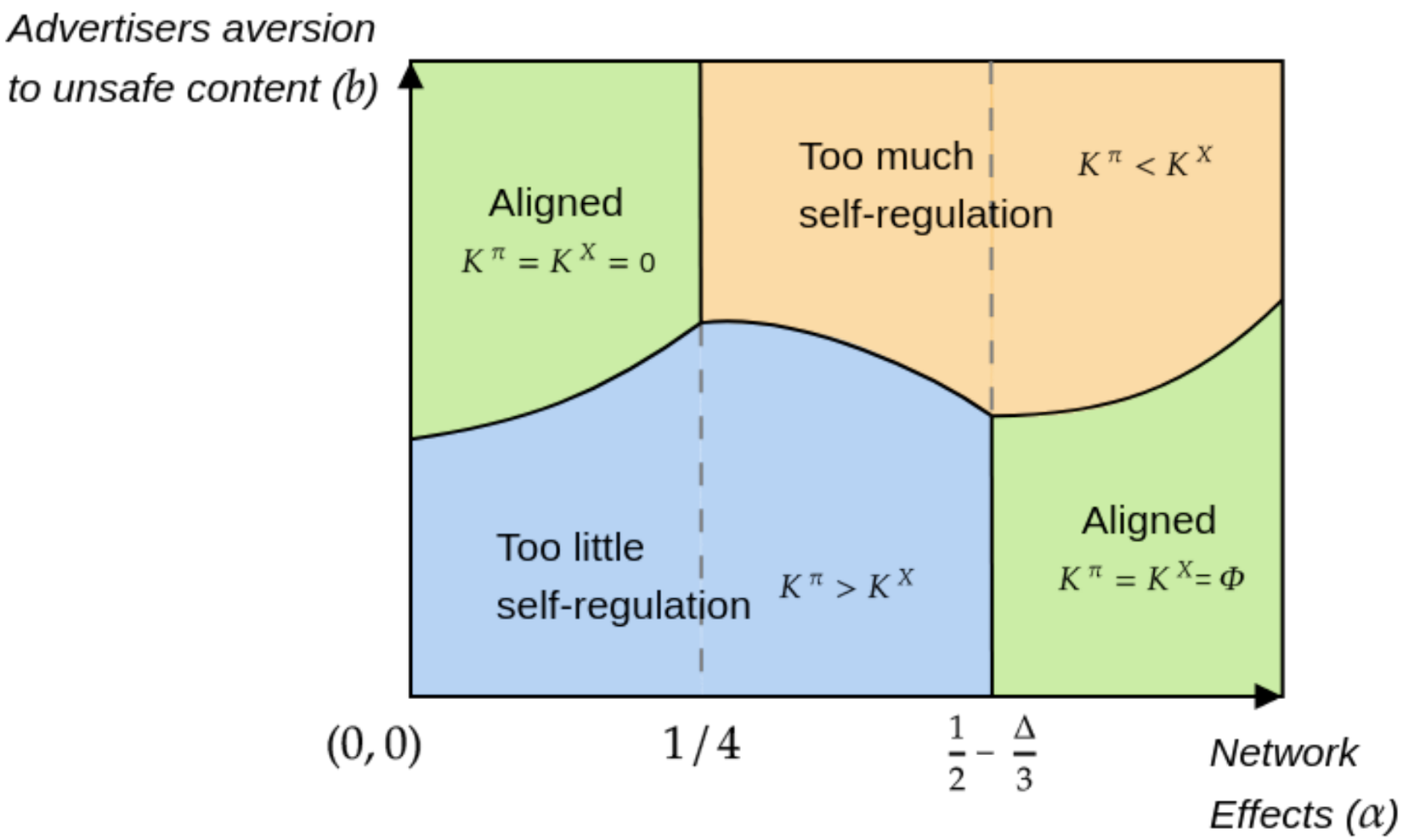

Blue Area:
Beneficial for the regulator to impose a minimal moderation policy

Orange Area: such a policy wouldn't bind.
Regulators would like to impose a maximal moderation policy to attract users from the fringe platform.

(We saw this in the DSA)

EXTENSIONS

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Allow for multihoming. User i utilities are:

- If single homing in $j \in \{1,2\}$: U_j^i
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Also here

High NE: unsafety min with a **more lenient** moderation wrt single-homing

Low NE: unsafety min with a **stricter** moderation wrt single-homing

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Main Result:

- With **converging** preferences + and violence **increasing** in unsafety, then:
  - **Intermediate levels of moderation are preferable to min violence**
  - **Why?** We can attract users to the moderated platform to read content safer than it would be without content moderation

CONCLUSION

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