

Effect of Banning Subreddits on Community Structure



Vincent Wong

Reddit bans 'deepfakes' AI porn commu

By Adi Robertson | @thedextrarchy | Feb 7, 2018, 1:28pm EST

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Reddit bans 'Fat People Hate' and other subreddits under new harassment rules

By Adi Robertson | @thedextrarchy | Jun 10, 2015, 4:08pm EDT

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Reddit bans its DarkNetMarkets subreddit

Reddit has officially banned the [r/DarkNetMarkets](#) and other subreddits dedicated to illegal dark web markets. Users attempting to access the subreddit were met with a message stating that the subreddit has been removed for violating community standards.

The subreddit had 160,000 readers, but its ban was a surprise to the Reddit community. This was mainly due to the fact that they were not shy about the fact that they were a place where users could go to buy drugs, guns, and other illegal items. They could often browse the community in hopes of finding a place to buy or sell.

“

Reddit Bans Slew of Communities Amid New Rule Targeting Sales, Trades, and Giveaways

Bryan Menegus
3/21/18 2:45pm • Filed to: REDDIT

33K 56 7



DARKNET

Reddit Bans Subreddits Dedicated to Dark Web Drug Markets and Selling Guns

Reddit announced new changes to its content policy, which led to the end of [r/DarkNetMarkets](#) and other communities dedicated to discussing potentially illegal activities.

SHARE



TWEET



Reddit bans 'deepfak

By Adi Robertson | @thedextrarchy | Feb 7, 2018, 1:28pm EST

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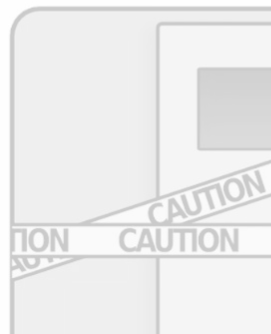


WEB | ENTERTAINMENT

Reddit bans 'Fat Peo under new harassm

By Adi Robertson | @thedextrarchy | Jun 10, 2015, 4:08pm EST

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TWO MONTHS AGO, THE INTERNET TRIED TO BANISH NAZIS. NO ONE KNOWS IF IT WORKED

By Adi Robertson | @thedextrarchy | Oct 9, 2017, 9:12am EDT

Illustrations by [Andrea Ucinl](#)

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In August 11th and 12th, the Charlottesville Unite the Right rally marked a turning point in modern American politics, where far-right

Reddit Bans Slew of Communities Amid New Rule Targeting Sales, Trades, and Giveaways

Bryan Menegus
3:21PM - 2:50pm • Mod on REDDIT

23K 3K 1



Bans Subreddits Dec Web Drug Markets & uns

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and other communities
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Complicated social phenomena

You Can't Stay Here: The Efficacy of Reddit's 2015 Ban Examined Through Hate Speech

ESHWAR CHANDRASEKHARAN, Georgia Institute of Technology
JIMASHANTHI PAVALANATHAN, Georgia Institute of Technology

There are also some users who believe that in banning FPH, Pao has initiated a **Streisand effect**, turning FPH subscribers into internet martyrs by drawing attention to them. FPH is gone for now, but some FPH subscribers have already departed Reddit for **Voat**, a Reddit competitor, to start a new community. Others are trying to "hydra" this moment by creating new FPH-like subreddits, which are being **banned as fast as they're being created**.

"Why Reddit's ban on Fat People Hate is ripping it apart" -- Alex Abad-Santos, Vox



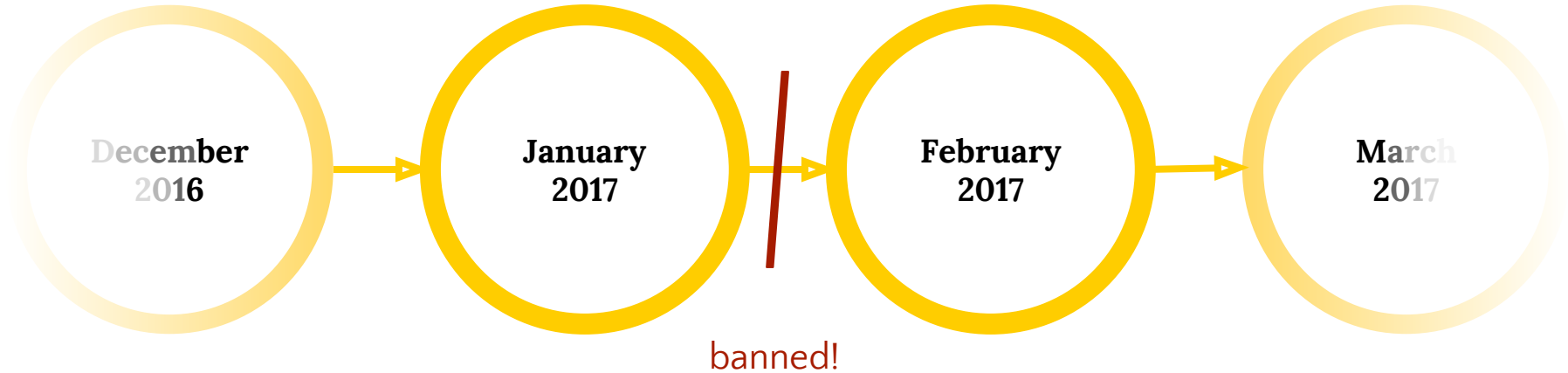
Project: Social networks

Let's see what happened to the community structure



Social networks around the ban

r/altright as a case study





The subreddit data

Users

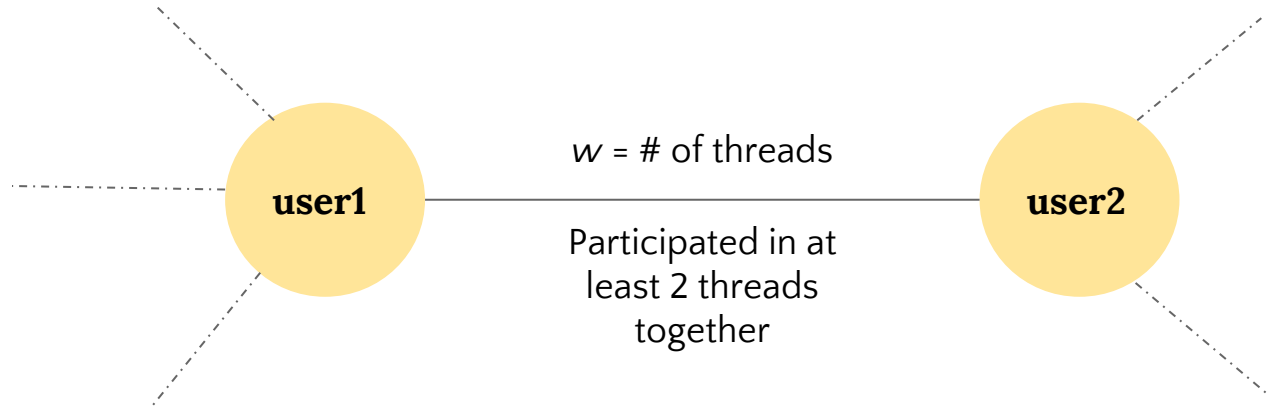
Took users who had posted in r/altright in January 2017, the month before the ban

Posts

Comments by those users from any subreddit in preceding or following two months



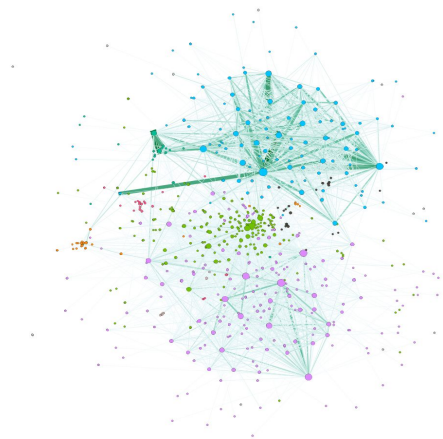
Creating networks



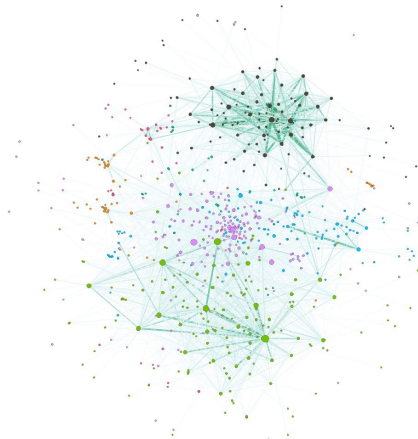
1

Networks

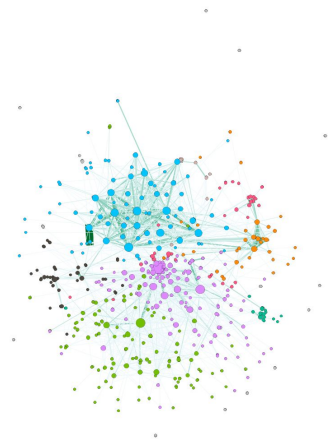
December 2016



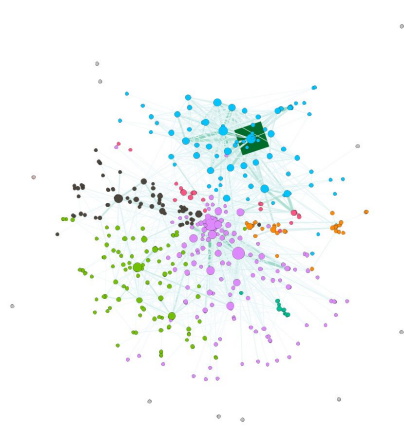
January 2017



February 2017



March 2017



(Node colors are
modularity class.
Edge colors are
weight.)

December 2016

r/DebateAltRight

January 2017

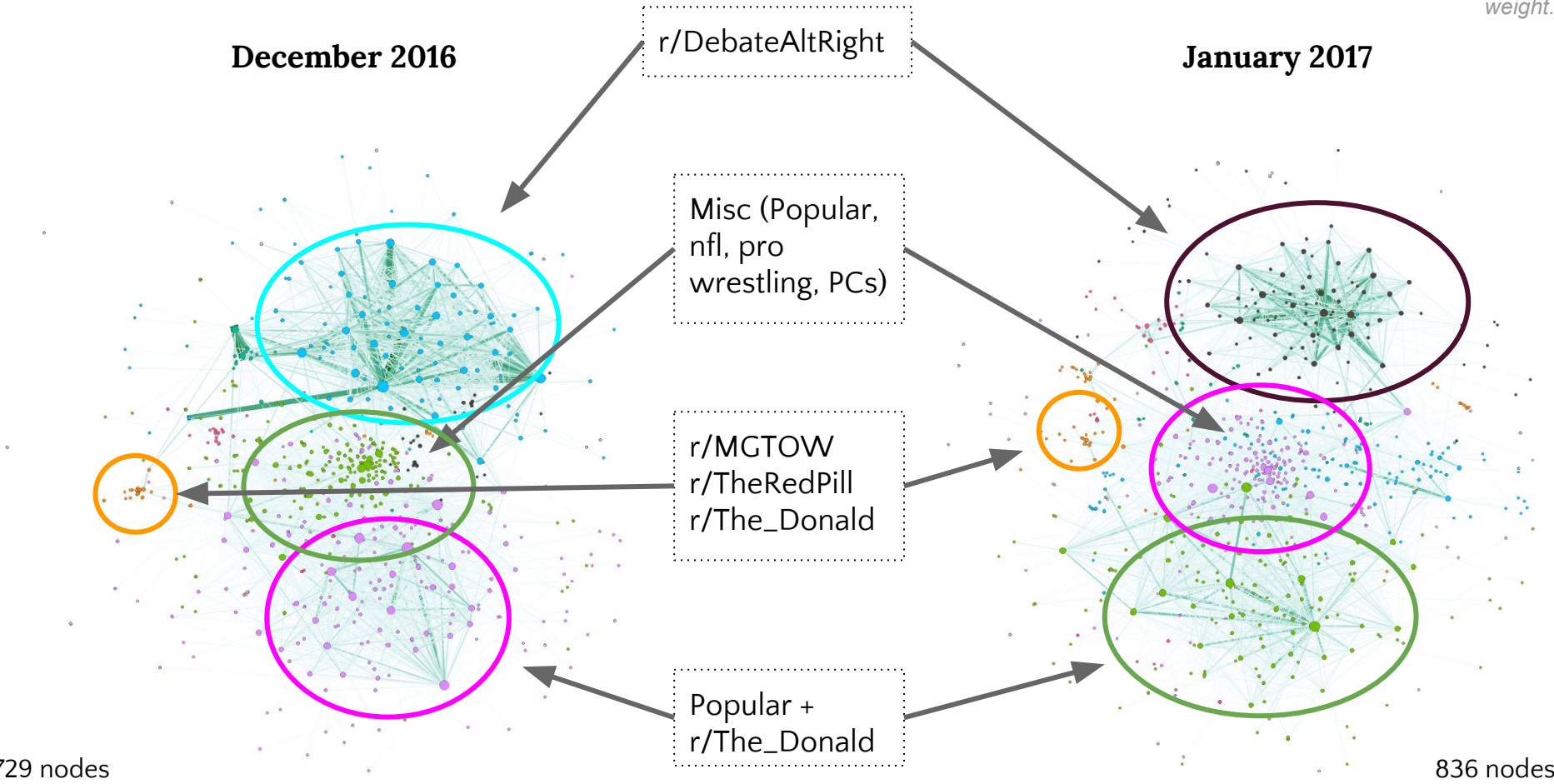
Misc (Popular,
nfl, pro
wrestling, PCs)

r/MGTOW
r/TheRedPill
r/The_Donald

Popular +
r/The_Donald

729 nodes

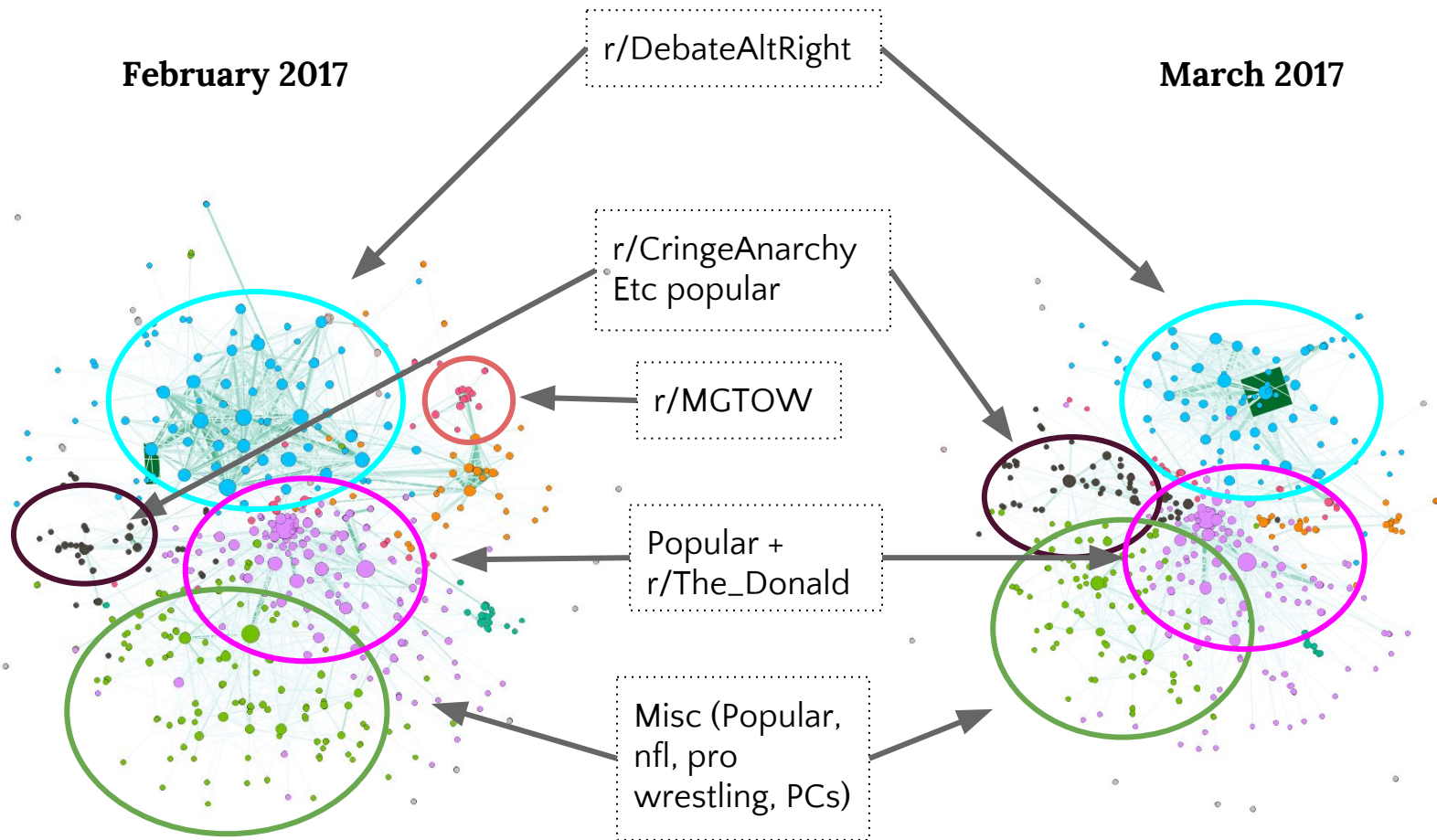
836 nodes



(Node colors are
modularity class.
Edge colors are
weight.)

February 2017

March 2017



570 nodes

497 nodes

2

Analysis

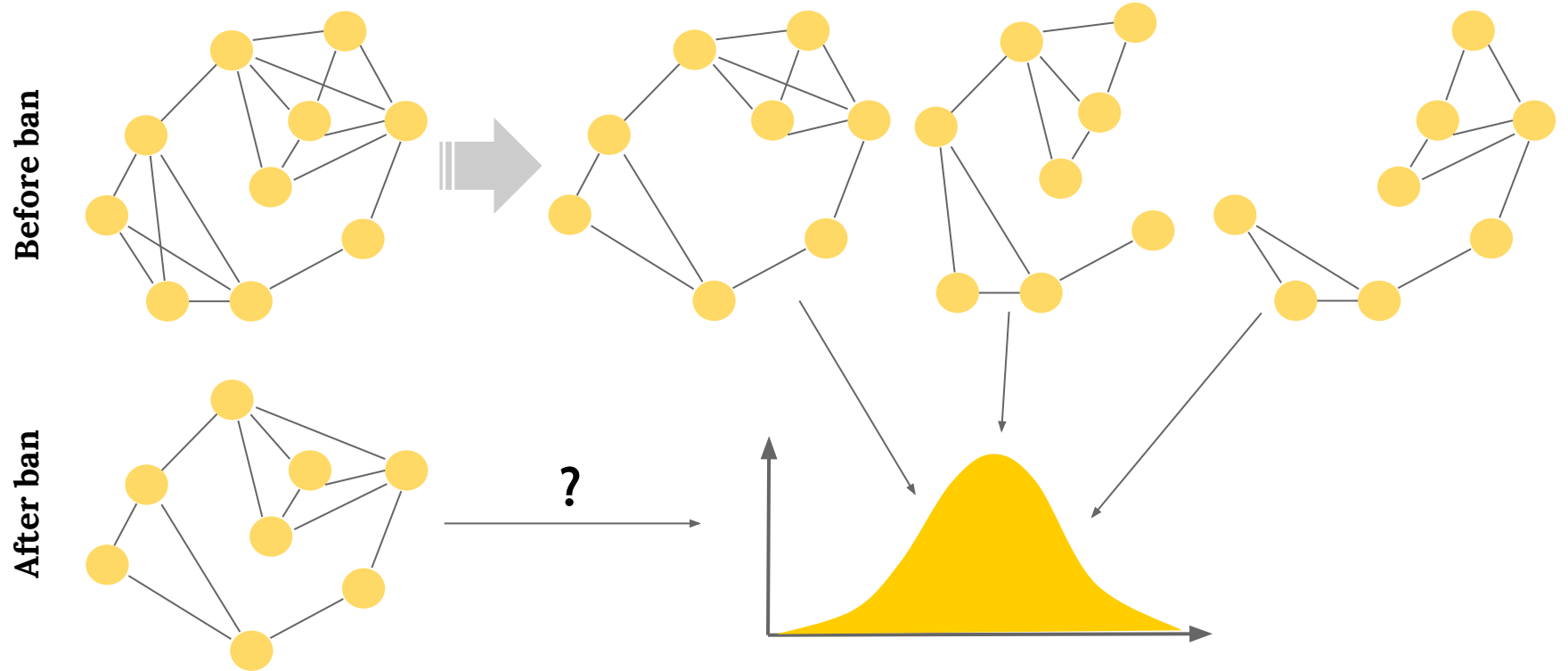


Did anything actually **change**?

Null model

If the ban changed the community structure, the network would be different than if nodes were removed at random.

Null model - Random deletions





Results

	Reject null?	Value (Mean)
Average degree	No	6.57 (6.88)
Diameter	No	8 (9)
Density	No	0.011 (0.012)
Average clustering coefficient	No	0.22 (0.26)
Number of cliques	No	1051 (1168)
Transitivity	Yes	0.27 (0.24)



Conclusions

- Little change to the network
- People probably fled the site independently

Future Work

- Longer-term analysis
- Evaluate across different banned subreddits



Thanks!

Any **questions** ?

You can find me

- at vmwong@iu.edu
- standing in front of you