340k unique users using a generic methodology (which can also be used for other platforms and other case studies). Although focused on a narrow slice of time, we found that, in general, users tweeting about Gamergate appear to be Twitter savvy and quite engaged with the platform. They produce more tweets than random users, and have more friends and followers as well. Surprisingly, we observed that, while expressing more negative sentiment overall, these users only differed significantly from random users with respect to joy. Finally, we looked at account suspension, finding that Gamergate users are less likely to be suspended due to the inherent difficulties in detecting and combating online harassment activities.

While we believe our work contributes to understanding large-scale online harassment, it is only a start. As part of future work, we plan to perform a more in-depth study of Gamergate, focusing on how it evolved over time. Overall, we argue that a deeper understanding of how online harassment campaigns function can enable our community to better address them and propose detection tools as well as mitigation strategies.

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