

UiO : **Department of Media and Communication**
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Social media companies' policies against bullying between protection and participation rights



Children's rights?

Following a statement of the aims and approach, this paper argues that Internet governance bodies give little consideration to children's rights, despite growing calls from international child rights organizations to address their rights in the digital age. Typically, when children are acknowledged it is in the context of child protection while their rights to provision and participation are overlooked.

Livingstone, S., Carr, J., & Byrne, J. (2015). One in Three: Internet Governance and Children's Rights.

Stakeholders?



Photo credit: Independent.co.uk



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Privatization of internet governance

- Social media platforms (from: DeNardis & Hackl, 2015, p.2):
 - 1. Intermediation of user generated content
 - 2. Allow for interactivity among users
 - 3. Direct engagement with the content
 - 4. Ability to articulate network connections with other users

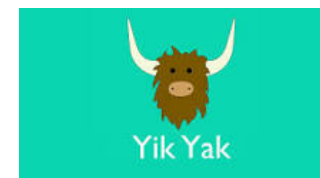
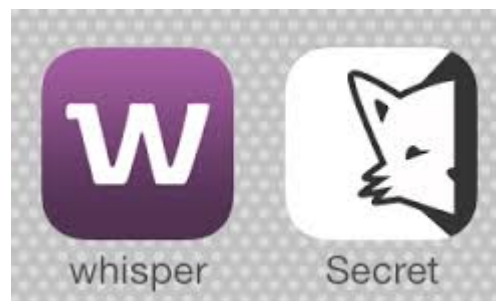
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Google+



Instagram



WhatsApp



Scope of study

- How have anti-bullying policies evolved and how are they changing?
- How do these policies balance the right to protection vs. participation?
- Analysis of corporate documents
- Interviews with company, e-safety NGO representatives and independent e-safety experts

Self-regulation & privatized governance

- “The creation, implementation and enforcement of rules by a group of actors, industry in particular, with minimal or no intervention by the state.” (Lievens, 2016, p. 77 cf. Lievens, 2010).
- Criticism: Assigning too much responsibility to the industry resulting in privatized governance (Tambini, Leonardi, Masden, 2008; DeNardis, 2014).
- Regulation “by raised eyebrow” --when policy makers are dissatisfied with an issue they indicate the possibility of legislation in an ambiguous manner --an incentive for the industry to self-regulate (McLaughlin, 2013)

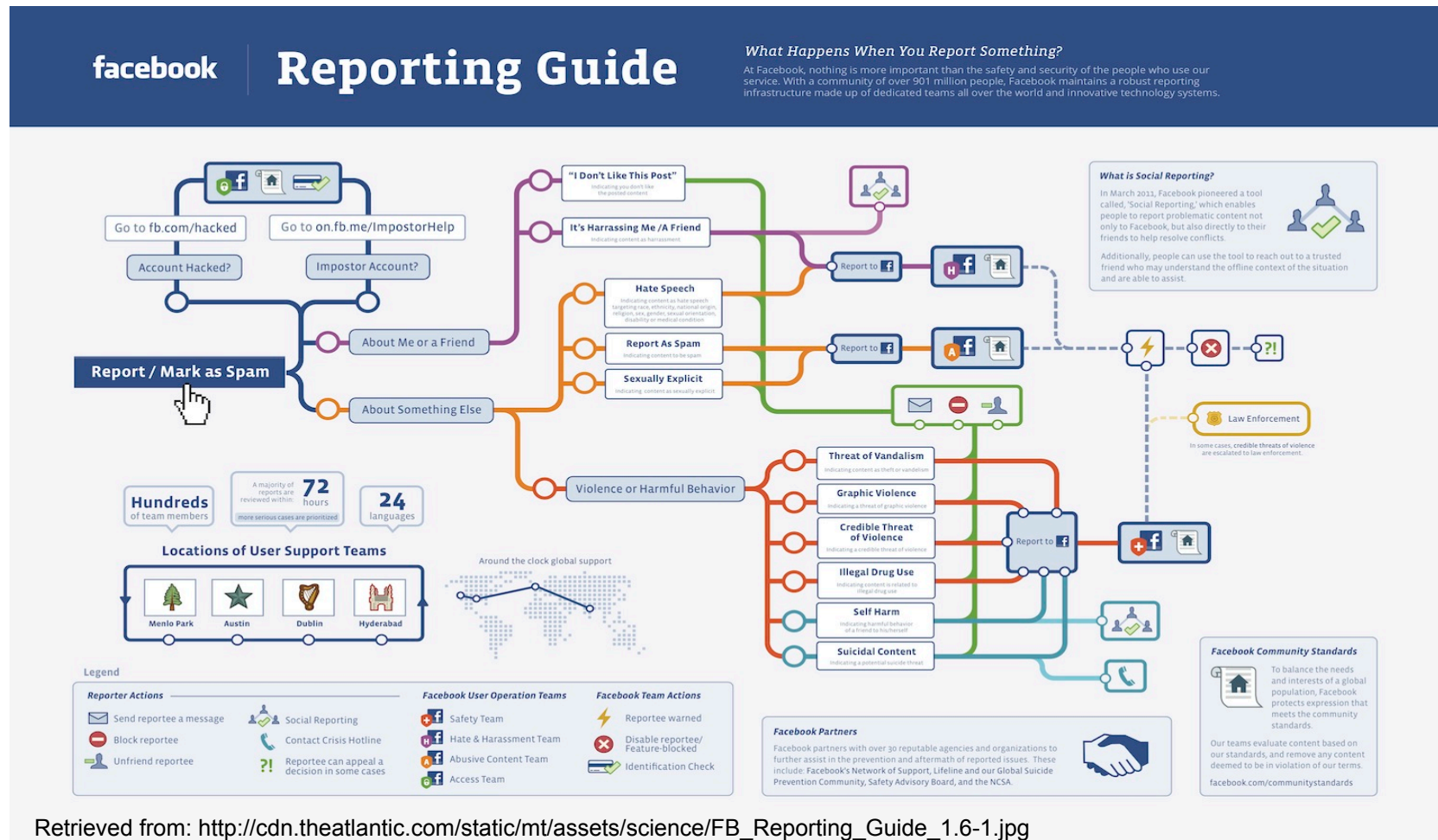
Self-regulatory initiatives-- Independent evaluation?

- **EU:**
- Safer Social Networking Principles (Lobe & Staksrud, 2010; Staksrud & Lobe, 2010; Donoso, 2011a,b)
- CEO Coalition
- ICT Coalition (O'Neill, 2014)
- **US:**
- Internet Safety Technical Task Force (Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society)

“Old” or “Standard” policies

- Reporting
- Content removal
- Blocking
- Filtering
- Focusing on the right to protection

Standard policies (reporting), example



“Advanced policies”

- “Allowing/Enabling/Empowering” the community of users to “manage” or “regulate” or “police” themselves –seek help on their own
- Digital citizenship approaches (education—prevention, Safety Centers)
- Facebook’s “social reporting”
- Up-voting & Down-voting (e.g. Yik Yak, Secret)
- **Focusing on the right to participation**



Example: Up-voting and Down-voting



Evidence of effectiveness?

- How to define effectiveness?
- Defining effectiveness in terms of rights?
- Evidence of effectiveness in terms of protection?
- Evidence of effectiveness in terms of participation?

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