Free Speech and Inclusivity: Friends or Foes?

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CSE Faculty Meeting Inclusion Minutes

Apr 16, 2021
Blast from the Past

Takeaways

- Use CS examples that make more people feel included and seen/heard, especially historically marginalized and/or under-represented groups in CS
- Be vigilant and not (unintentionally) exclusionary
- Some caveats to be mindful of:
  - Dangers of stereotyping
  - Difficulty of pronouncing/spelling/remembering
Blast from the Past

Takeaways

I recently spoke at UCSD CSE’s faculty meeting as part of our “Inclusion Minutes.” This is an activity we have adopted in which a faculty member shares a short experience/story or tips/nuggets on our efforts on enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in computing. It is presented as a short (<5min) opening talk. The topic I chose was one that has been proving meaningful in practice for me: inclusion in CS examples.

Inclusion and Diversity

When we talk about DEI, we recognize the importance of ensuring that
Inclusive CS Examples

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Blast from the Past

Takeaways

Inclusive CS Examples

Diversity and Inclusion in Database Conference Venues

The Data Management community is committed to the promotion of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our professional activities. We celebrate the diversity in our community and welcome everyone regardless of age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, country of origin, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, education, and work experience. We also welcome people and opinions of all political persuasions, as long as they abide by the ACM policy against harassment. Our initiative coordinates D&I efforts across the data management community and includes this year’s D&I chairs of SIGMOD, VLDB, SoCC, and ICDE.

For more information, please refer to https://dbdni.github.io/

Please follow this webpage for updates on the steps we are taking to enhance the inclusivity and diversity of our conference and community. As we pursue more initiatives, we may have some missteps. We value your feedback and ideas to help us all build a healthier and more welcoming community.

If you have any comments, questions, suggestions, or complaints, please email the SIGMOD Diversity and Inclusion Chairs: Avilia Floratou (avflor@msn.com) and Arun Kumar (arunkk@eng.ucsd.edu).

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY IN WRITING

As a large scientific and technical community that has a direct impact on many people from different backgrounds around the world, Diversity and inclusion are crucial for the data management community. ACM explains these goals as follows. Diversity is achieved when the individuals around
Blast from the Past

**Takeaways**

**Inclusive CS Examples**

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Credits to Avrilia Floratou and Arun Kumar, and ACM SIGMOD

ACM CCS is committed to taking steps to enhance the diversity and inclusion of our community. We value your feedback and the same idea on how to make our community healthier and more welcoming to everyone, we are eager to hear your diverse ideas and more open conversations regarding this goal. If you have any comments, questions, suggestions, or complaints, please email Vigna (vigna@ucsb.edu) or Elaine Shi (runting@cs.cmu.edu).

**Inclusion and Diversity in Writing**

As a large scientific and technical community that has a direct impact on many people from different backgrounds and are crucial for the security community. ACM explains these goals as follows. Diversity is achieved when the individual variety of backgrounds and experience, leading to a breadth of viewpoints, reasoning, and approaches (also referred when the environment is characterized by behaviors that welcome and embrace diversity ("the how"). Both are important communication such as posters and talks.
I LOVE Free Speech!
I LOVE Free Speech!
I LOVE Free Speech!

DB Theory USELESS!  DB Theory USEFUL!
DB Systems BEST!
I LOVE Free Speech!

DB Theory USELESS!  DB Theory USEFUL!
DB Systems BEST!
I LOVE Free Speech!

DB Theory USELESS!
DB Systems BEST!

DB Theory USEFUL!

Work with DB Theory folks and CONVERT them to DB Systems!
I LOVE Free Speech!

DB Theory USELESS!
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Story for Today

Act 1: Facts

Act 2: Hopes

Act 3: Finale
Fact

No nation on Earth offers “Free” Speech.
Fact

All Free Speech rights everywhere are fettered.
First Amendment to the United States Constitution

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"First Amendment" redirects here. For the first amendments to other constitutions, see First Amendment (disambiguation).

The First Amendment (Amendment I) to the United States Constitution prevents the government from making laws which regulate an establishment of religion, or that would prohibit the free exercise of religion, or abridge the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, the freedom of assembly, or the right to petition the government for redress of grievances. It was adopted on December 15, 1791, as one of the ten amendments that constitute the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights was proposed to assuage Anti-Federalist opposition to Constitutional ratification. Initially, the First Amendment applied only to laws enacted by the Congress, and many of its provisions were interpreted more narrowly than they are today. Beginning with Gitlow v. New York (1925), the Supreme Court applied the First Amendment to states—a process known as incorporation—through the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

In Everson v. Board of Education (1947), the Court drew on Thomas Jefferson's correspondence to call for "a wall of separation between church and State", though the precise boundary of this separation remains in dispute. Speech rights were expanded significantly in a series of 20th and 21st century court decisions which protected various forms of political speech, anonymous speech, campaign finance, pornography, and school speech; these rulings also defined a series of exceptions to First Amendment protections. The Supreme Court overturned English common law precedent to increase the burden of proof for defamation and libel suits, most notably in New York Times Co. v. Sullivan (1964). Commercial speech, however, is less protected by the First Amendment than political speech, and is therefore subject to greater regulation.

The Free Press Clause protects publication of information and opinions, and applies to a wide variety of media. In Near v. Minnesota (1931) and New York Times v. United States (1971), the Supreme Court ruled that the First Amendment
United States free speech exceptions

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Exceptions to free speech in the United States refers to categories of speech that are not protected by the First Amendment. According to the Supreme Court of the United States, the U.S. Constitution protects free speech while allowing for limitations on certain categories of speech.[1]

Categories of speech that are given lesser or no protection by the First Amendment (and therefore may be restricted) include obscenity, fraud, child pornography, speech integral to illegal conduct, speech that incites imminent lawless action, speech that violates intellectual property law, true threats, and commercial speech such as advertising. Defamation that causes harm to reputation is a tort and also an exception to free speech.

Along with communicative restrictions, less protection is afforded for uninhibited speech when the government acts as subsidizer or speaker, is an employer, controls education, or regulates the mail, airwaves, legal bar, military, prisons, and immigration.

Contents [hide]

1 Incitement
   1.1 Incitement to suicide
2 False statements of fact
3 Obscenity
4 Child pornography
5 Fighting words
6 Threatening the President of the United States
7 Speech owned by others
8 Commercial speech
9 Restrictions based on special capacity of government
   9.1 As employer
   9.2 As regulator of the airwaves
   9.3 As educator
   9.4 As subsidizer or speaker
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Fact

Fettered freedom is the foundation of civilization.
Apep/Apophis
Untruth, injustice, chaos

Ma’at
Truth, justice, order
THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF Human Rights
Fact

Fetters created/updated/deleted by a delicate mix:
  Top-down Transparency in design +
  Bottom-up Accountability mechanisms
Free expression is a cornerstone not only of the U.S. Constitution, but also of academic freedom. UC San Diego supports student expression, rights and responsibilities to move toward positive, educational use of Free Speech.
UC SAN DIEGO PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UC San Diego community. UC San Diego faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.

To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UC San Diego strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. These principles of community are vital to the success of the University and the well being of its constituents. UC San Diego faculty, staff, and students are expected to practice these basic principles as individuals and in groups.

- We value each member of the UC San Diego community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual's effort is vital to achieving the goals of the University.
- We affirm each individual's right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.
- We value the cultural diversity of UC San Diego because it enriches our lives and the University. We celebrate
ACM's Mission, Vision, Core Values and Goals

Mission:

ACM is a global scientific and educational organization dedicated to advancing the art, science, engineering, and application of computing, serving both professional and public interests by fostering the open exchange of information and by promoting the highest professional and ethical standards.

Vision:

ACM will continue to be the premiere global computing society.

Core values:

- Technical excellence
- Education and technical advancement
- Ethical computing and technology for positive impact
- Diversity and inclusion

2021-2025 Goals:

- Providing a sustainably open Digital Library in 2025 to increase the visibility and accessibility of the community’s research.
- Continuing to diversify the ACM global community, providing a welcoming community for all.
- Providing the world’s leading venues (conferences, publications, magazines) for research that shapes the future of computing and careers of those in computing.
Policy Against Harassment at ACM Activities


The open exchange of ideas is central to the Association for Computing Machinery’s mission. This requires an environment that embraces diversity and provides a safe, welcoming environment for all.

This policy **applies to all ACM activities**, including:

- conferences, symposia, workshops, and events sponsored, co-sponsored, or in cooperation with ACM any ACM SIG or Chapter or any other ACM subunit;
- ACM member meetings;
- exchanges among committees or other bodies associated with ACM activities **publications and communications sent through communication channels associated with ACM**, including social media.

Expected Behavior

We expect all participants in ACM activities to abide by this policy in all venues, including ancillary events and unofficial social gatherings:

- Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions;
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech;
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants;
- Alert community leaders if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this policy, even if they seem inconsequential.

Unacceptable Behavior
Fact

Free speech is not freedom from **counter-speech** nor freedom from **consequences** of speech.
Desire for Consistency is a powerful human trait.
When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men—yes, black men as well as white men—would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
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MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
Story for Today

Act 1: Facts

Act 2: Hopes

Act 3: Finale
Hope

**Academic Freedom** exists to help uphold truth, justice, knowledge; not self-aggrandizement
Hope

Raison d’être for (Academic) Free Speech is Speaking Truth To Power.
Hope

Truth:
Not lies, half-truths, bullshit, hatred, venom, …
Hope

To Power:
Not trample on the powerless, those who cannot afford to speak out, …
Hope

Speaking:
Marketplace of ideas, reined in by fetters.
Beware of groupthink, “Cancel” Culture.
Story for Today

Act 1: Facts

Act 2: Hopes

Act 3: Finale
Finale

Freedom without Responsibility
Power without Accountability
Both without Transparency

=>

Untruth, injustice, chaos
Finale
Finale

Error

High

Low

Model Complexity

Too Low

Too High

High
Finale

![Graph showing model complexity vs. train error, with the x-axis representing model complexity from 'Too Low' to 'Too High' and the y-axis representing error from 'High' to 'Low'. The graph shows a downward trend indicating that as model complexity increases, train error decreases.](image-url)
Finale

Model Complexity

Train Error

Test Error

High

Low

Error

Too Low

Too High
Finale

Model Complexity

Train Error

Test Error

Overfitting

Error

High

Low

Too Low

Too High
Error Model Complexity

Train Error Too Low Too High

Test Error

Overfitting

Finale

High Low

Underfitting

Model Complexity
Overall Societal Harm

Free Speech Fetters

Finale

Too Low

High

Low

Too High
Finale

Silences paradigm shifting ideas

Overall Societal Harm

Free Speech Fetters

Too Low

Too High

High

Low
Finale

Overall Societal Harm

Free Speech Fetters

Too Low

Too High

High

Low

Throws marginalized groups under the bus

Silences paradigm shifting ideas
But wait, what if I told you it was a false dichotomy all along?!
Finale

Model Complexity

Train Error

Test Error

Error

Low

High

Low

High

Model Complexity
Finale

The diagram illustrates the relationship between model complexity and error rates. The x-axis represents model complexity, ranging from low to high. The y-axis represents error rates, with high and low levels.

- **Train Error**: The green line shows the decrease in training error as model complexity increases. It starts high at low complexity and decreases to a low level as complexity increases.
- **Test Error**: The red line indicates the decrease in test error as model complexity increases. It starts high at low complexity, peaks at intermediate complexity, and then decreases significantly as complexity increases.

The peak in test error at intermediate complexity is a common phenomenon known as overfitting, where a model performs well on the training data but poorly on unseen data.

This graph highlights the importance of choosing an appropriate model complexity to balance fit and generalization.
**Finale**

Model Complexity

High

Low

Error

Train Error

Test Error

Interpolation Regime
Finale

Overall Societal Harm

Sophistication of Fetters

Extra Prudent Regime
Finale

Overall Societal Harm

Sophistication of Fetters

Extra Prudent Regime
Finale

Overall Societal Harm

Low

High

Low

High

Sophistication of Fetters

Extra Prudent Regime
Finale

Overall Societal Harm

Low

Low

High

High

Sophistication of Fetters

Extra Prudent Regime
Moral of the Story: A Virtuous Cycle?

(Fettered) Free Speech

Marginalized Groups
Moral of the Story: A Virtuous Cycle?

(Fettered) Free Speech  \[\text{Empowers}\]  Marginalized Groups
Moral of the Story: A Virtuous Cycle?

(Fettered) Free Speech \(\xrightarrow{\text{Empowers}}\) Marginalized Groups

\(\xrightarrow{\text{Enrich}}\)

NetFlix, hulu, Government
Moral of the Story: A Virtuous Cycle?

(Fettered) Free Speech  Empowers  Marginalized Groups

Enrich

NETFLIX  hulu
Relevant Readings

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apep
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maat
https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/122701268/i-have-a-dream-speech-in-its-entirety
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bias%E2%80%93variance_tradeoff
https://www.pnas.org/content/116/32/15849
https://medium.com/@arunis100/inclusive-cs-examples-b5f40e003815
https://thedatadossier.blogspot.com/2021/03/the-end-of-db-culture-wars-and-new-boom.html
https://csforinclusion.wordpress.com

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