

The ACCC's Digital Platforms Services Inquiry will examine the state of competition for social media services in Australia as part of the sixth interim report of the ACCC's five-year [Digital Platform Services Inquiry](#).

"We want to hear from businesses and consumers about their experiences with social media services, including with Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and Snapchat. We hope to examine trends in **user preferences and engagement over time, and consider how users choose social media services.**"

In its Digital Platforms Inquiry, the ACCC concluded that Facebook (now Meta) had substantial market power in the provision of social media services in Australia. This report will update the ACCC's assessment of these services and consider changes that have occurred since 2019.

"We are also eager to receive feedback on the barriers to entry and expansion for social media services in Australia, and if new entrants such as TikTok have changed the competitive landscape for social media services in Australia," Ms Cass-Gottlieb said.

The ACCC is also seeking views on the **use and abuse of social media services for scams and misleading or deceptive content**. Australians lost more than \$144 million to scams on social media in 2021, almost double the amount recorded in 2020 and four times the amount in 2017.

Views on the effectiveness of processes offered by social media platforms for consumers and business to report potentially misleading claims in social media advertising are also encouraged.

Reply:

As an account holder of the Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter social media platforms, and speaking from personal experience, I am very concerned about my own and other people's financial safety and wellbeing.

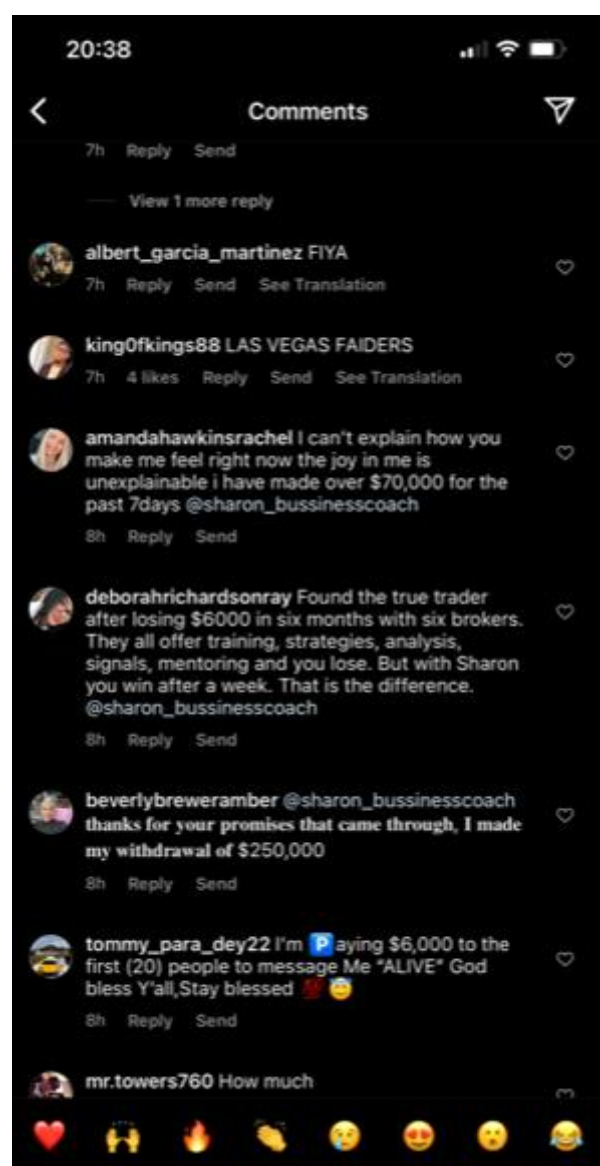
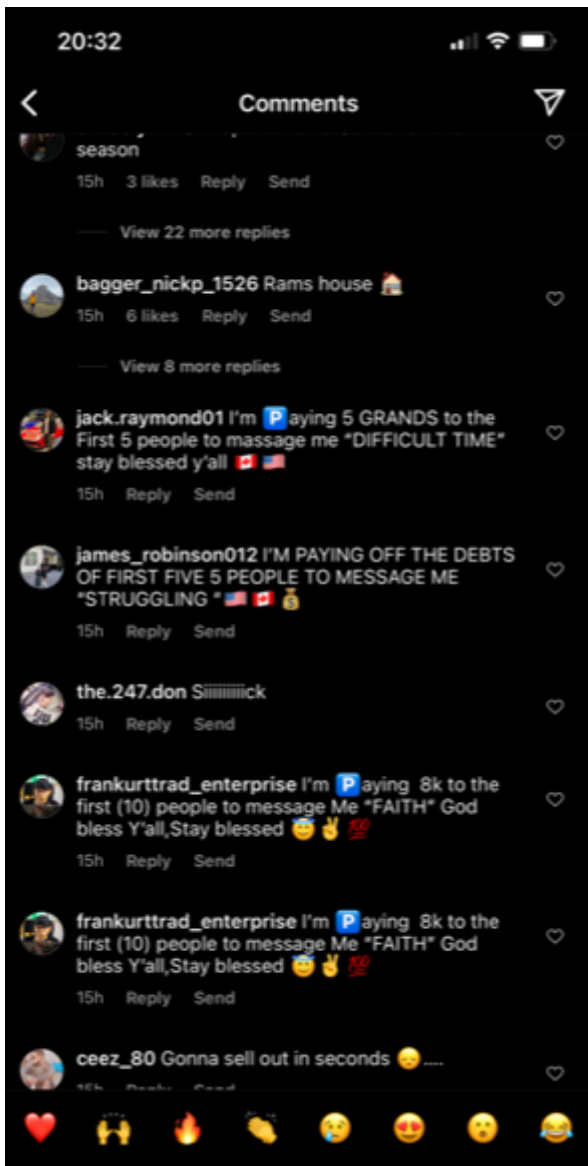
In terms of Facebook, the main concerns are:

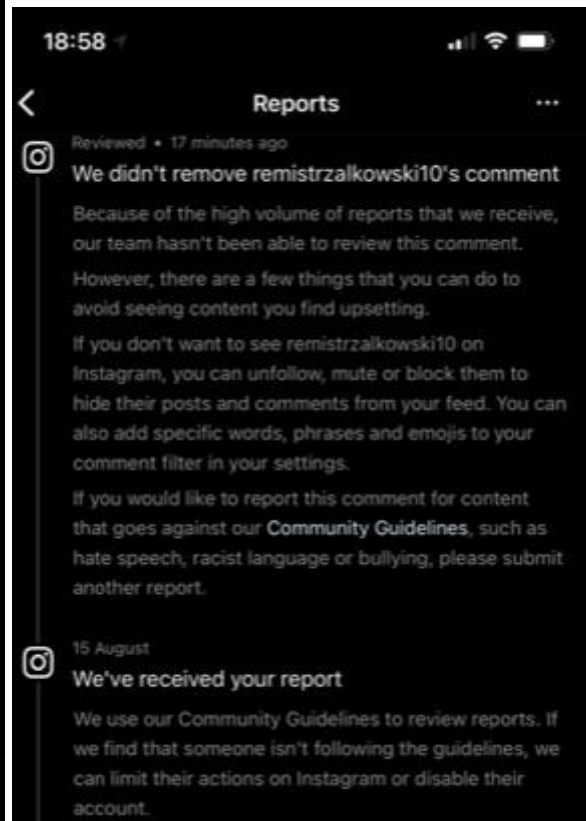
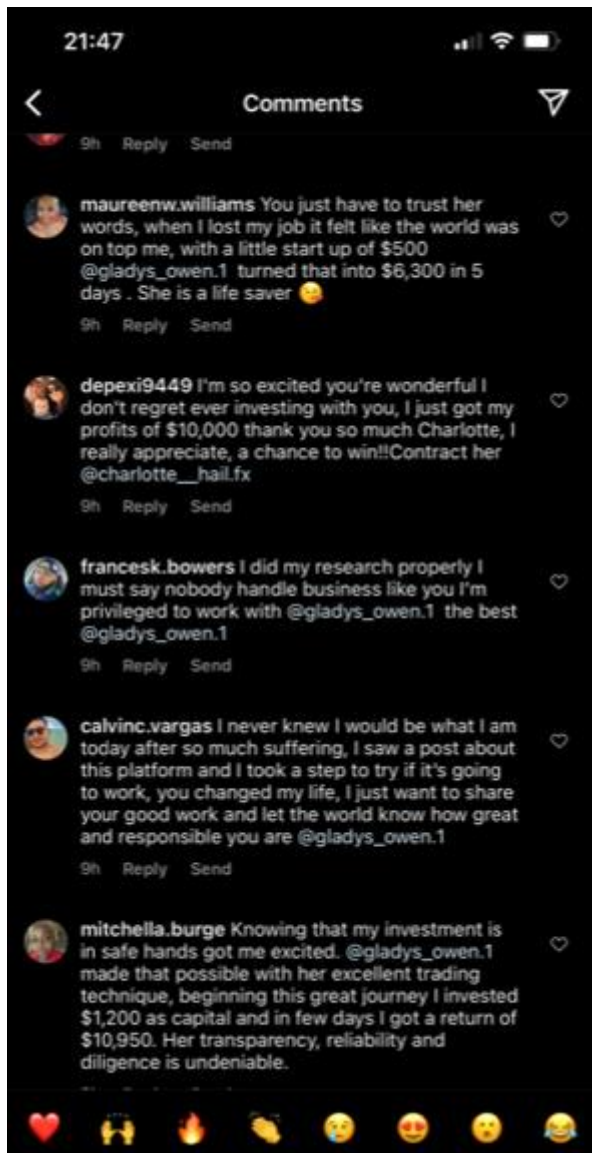
- Apparent lack of concern or control of page account creation
- Appears to allow obvious scammers to create pages to spread spam, scams and misinformation, **which given adverts cost money is quite blatant enabling of scams!**
- Appears to have no control over pages misrepresenting celebrities or other public figures, such as Maggie Beer supposedly promoting gummies. A lot of pages using images from real companies to promote their knock-off goods such as Chanel, RM Williams, etc
- Little regard to advertisements being relevant or regionally relevant, for instance getting advertisements in NSW for eyelash enhancements in Los Angeles
- Relies on account holders to report violations of their policy
- Gathers information from web browsing to push 'adverts' at users that are not even relevant, I get so frustrated with this platform because I can't control the adverts I see. They have removed any inability to access the list of 'key words' that drives the adverts you see
- They seem to have removed the ability to hide pages in future, just ads from those pages
- Unable to block pages
- Unable to stop alcohol and gambling advertising even though settings indicate this, noting alcohol is not an 'opt out'
- Adverts, legitimate and not, often appear every three posts on the timeline

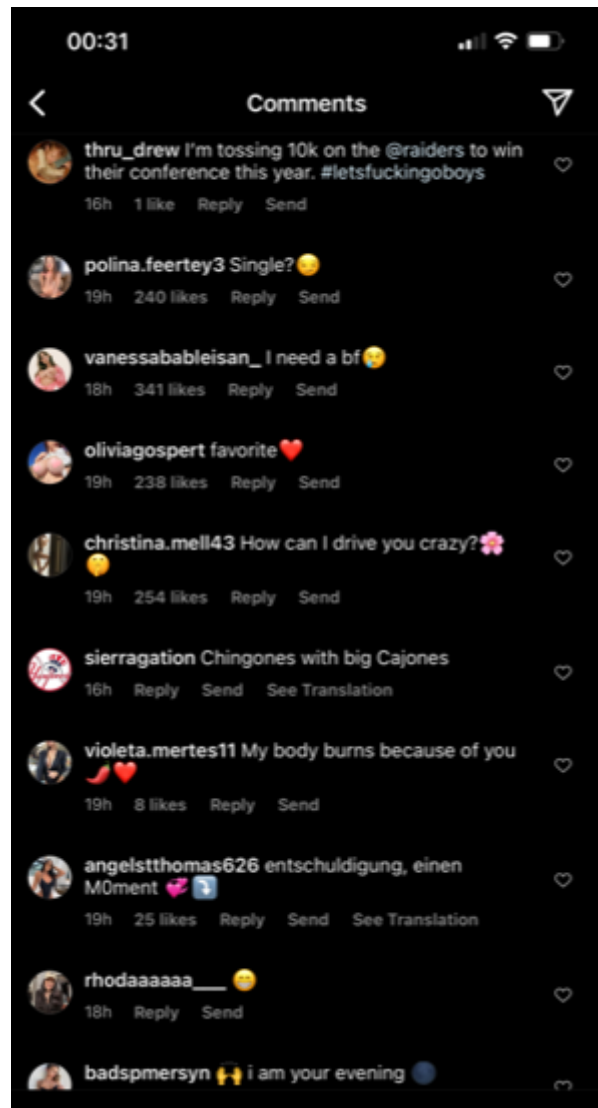
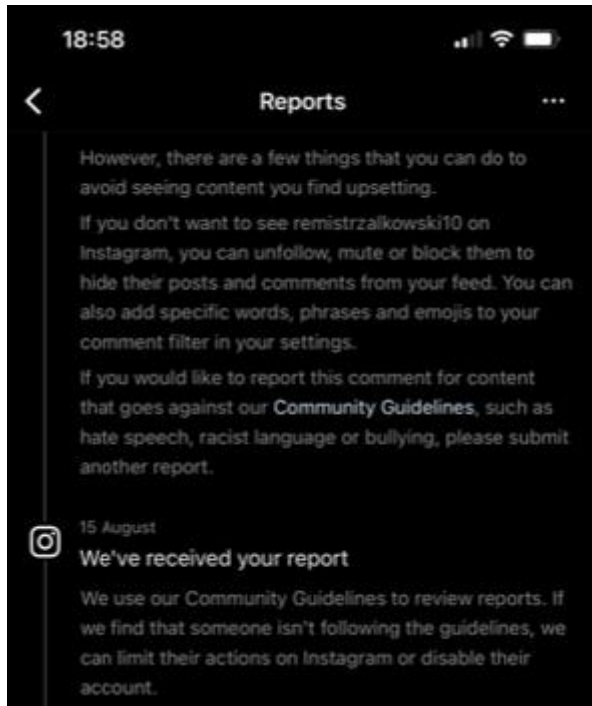
All in all, given I have limited options to control what I am being 'fed' by Facebook I have significantly reduced my engagement with the platform.

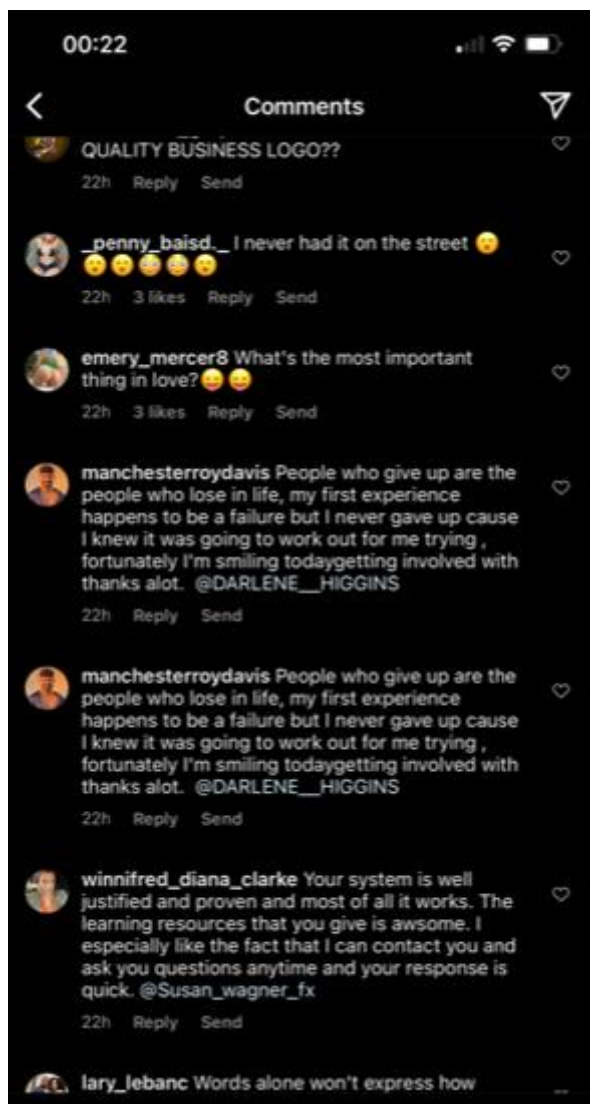
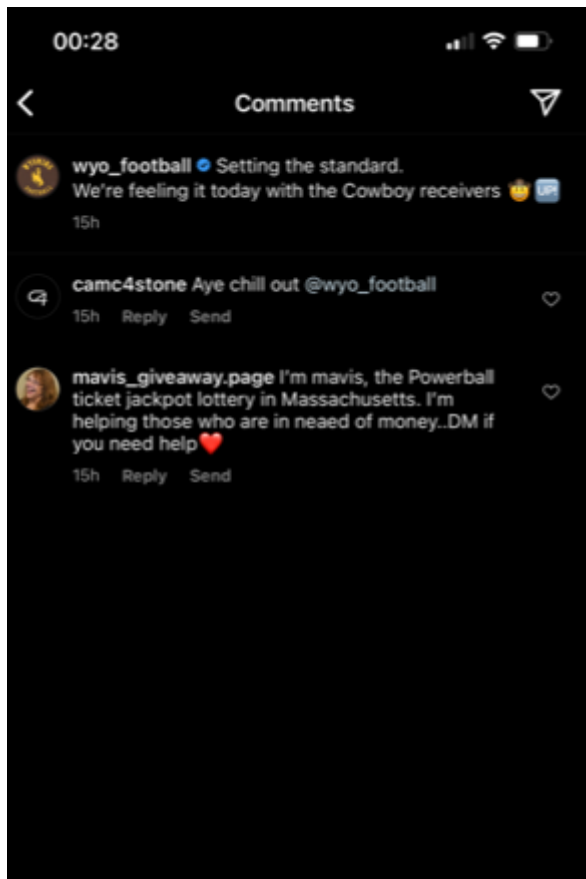
In terms of Instagram, the main concerns are:

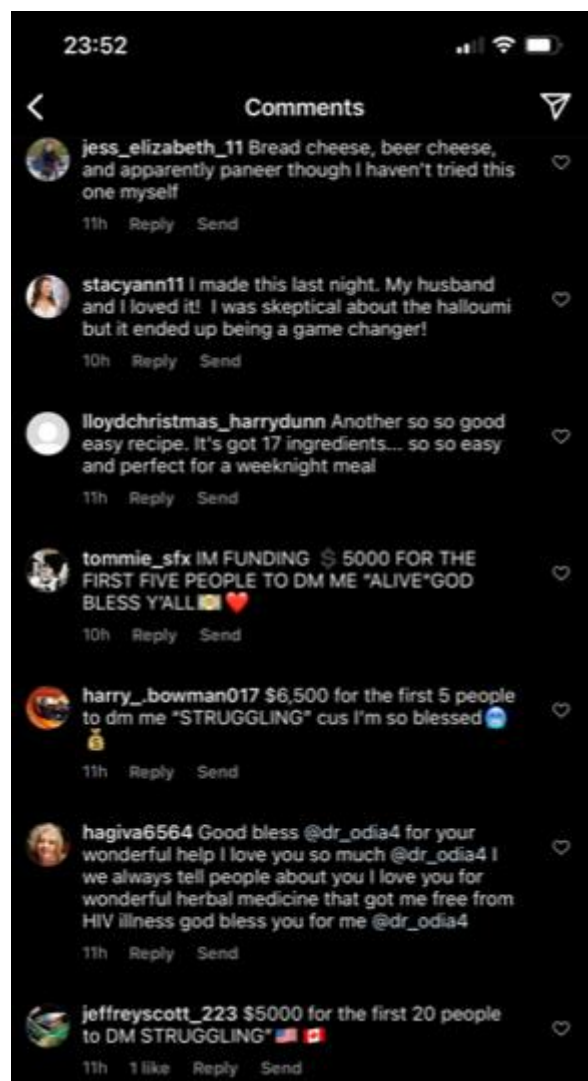
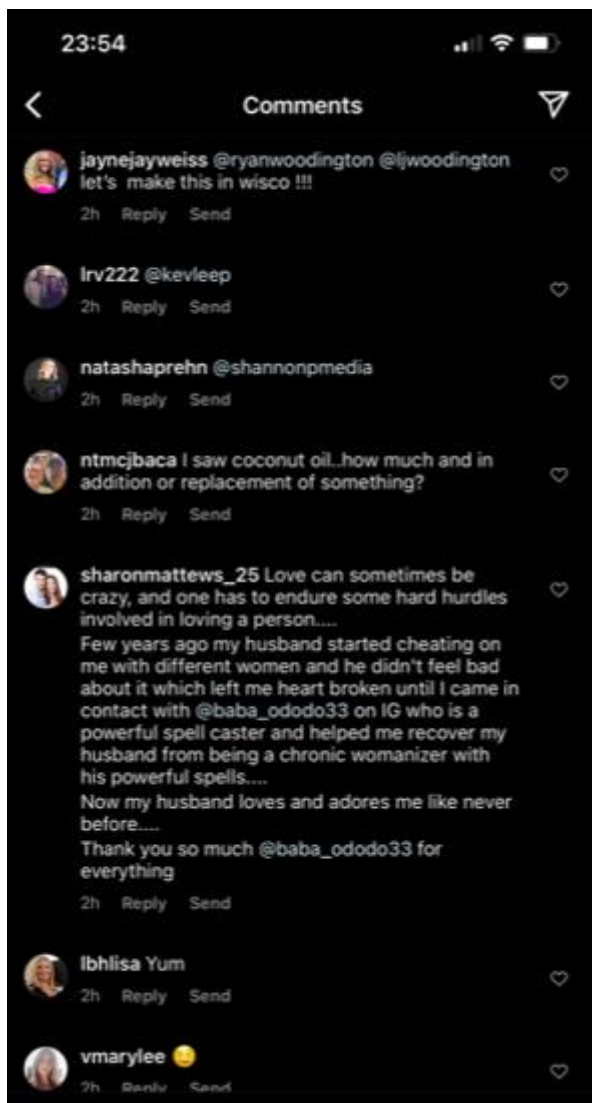
- Apparent lack of concern or control of page account creation, I suspect scam pages are mass creating new accounts then using those accounts to spread spam to promote the original account (see photos, multiple comments on a post all @-ing the same original account holder, usually a crypto or 'cure-all' account) (pyramid-scheme, like)
- Some pages I follow are inundated with spam, page owners seem not to care
- A football page I follow, on average would have about **40%** of all comments on a post porn, crypto, or health scam, sometimes when there is low engagement spam/scams are the **only** comments or make up the **bulk** of the comments on a post
- Common Instagram spam/scam are crypto (top type), health misinformation selling cures for AIDs, herpes, cancer, etc, spells for relationships, lottery winners wanting to share their winnings, and offer to pay bills for people in need (mostly crypto or bitcoin accounts).
- A lot of misinformation about C-19 and other recent diseases/vaccinations/masks as well as the above reference to these 'Doctors' who sell some magical healing drink to cure just about every ill in the world. There seem to be an awful lot of people on this platform who have been healed of herpes. Seems to use the same account manipulation/creation method (just my theory) where the main account creates pseudo followers to post spam referring back to the original account who can cure your health or financial woes
- Every day I report between **100-300** scam posts, **every day**, and that's just the accounts I follow. Some are successful, others just create new accounts and start again
- On one particular post recently **150/105** comments were spam, all reported, all likely still allowed to post spam
- Appears to allow obvious scammers to create pages to spread spam, scams and misinformation (see photos)
- As for Facebook there is little regard to advertisements being relevant or regionally relevant, for instance getting advertisements in NSW for eyelash enhancements in Los Angeles
- Relies on account holders to report violations of their policy
- Gathers information from web browsing to push 'adverts' at users that are not even relevant, I get so frustrated with this platform because I can't control the adverts I see
- Have to use **filtered words** to try and control the type of advertising I see and as it seems not to read the text attached to a post it's not very successful
- Currently seeing advertisements for **blocked pages** and comments from **blocked accounts**, I have reported this several times with no response. This is a concern from a psychological wellbeing perspective also
- Unable to stop alcohol and gambling advertising, nowhere I can see to opt out
- All in all, given I have limited options to control what I am being 'fed' by Facebook I have significantly reduced my engagement with the platform.











While I use Instagram daily, this platform makes me a quite angry due to the **overwhelming** amount of spam and apparent lack of desire on Meta's behalf to do anything (at all) about it. Their 'solution' is that we should just block the accounts or use filtering words (I tried filtering, it doesn't work and other things get filtered out that shouldn't)

In terms of Twitter, the main concerns are:

- Their rules around the definition of bullying or harassment seem very arbitrary
- Gambling and alcohol adverts built into video links that are unable to be opted out of
- Porn accounts with eye-watering public images that occasionally spam replies in accounts I follow, I usually block them
- Crypto spam is increasing but doesn't appear to be as significant a problem as Instagram
- Without locking your account, which is not practical, does not prevent others from 'doxing' your comment, re-tweeting it, or stealing your comment and posting it without tagging you to dox you. Doxing is becoming quite an issue on this platform and should not rely on privatising my comments to prevent it, it should be a reportable feature in itself
- Apparently once attempted to encourage users to review a tweet before swearing but doesn't seem to have had any effect
- Harassment is rife, particularly religious persecution. Reports are not always successful

This is my default platform, it's not perfect but it's slightly better than the other two