Reddit is well known for their April Fool's Events, but some years are better than others. As we have a dataset of years gone by, it seemed like a good idea to try and sum up everyone's opinions on what has and hasn't gone well with past events. The top portion is an open letter about the Sequence. Below is a table with the ups and downs of previous events, including comments on respective events. Finally, some suggestions from the community.

The Open Letter

What happened?

Everyone loves Reddit's idea of April Fools Day, a social experiment, where the entire Reddit community participates. Most of Reddit might be in the dark, but over the past few days, there has been significant controversy regarding r/Sequence: both because of its design, as well as the allegation that it is being primarily controlled by a Discord server. Let me try to clear up things and try to point out things to the developers.

The Buildup

The buildup for the event was immensely high, almost too much. An ARG (Alternate Reality Game) went on for approximately three days, giving players small hints alluding to what the event was going to be. Snakeroom was the driving force behind efforts to find out what would be coming. Eventually, the description of Sequence was handed out. Everyone was ready for an "r/place:part2", and many people were disappointed. They were burnt out and complained that the buildup overshadowed the event itself. The devs should have made things simpler. Snakeroom was a massive congregation of people interested in Sequence.

Lack of interest

1) Complicated

This year, many people think r/Sequence has had a lot of problems from the get-go. The concept wasn't explained coherently for the first few hours. Several Redditors found the event complicated and were quick to leave. r/Sequence was essentially Reddit inside of Reddit. The fact that all scenes for a single act were added at once made it practically impossible to pick a plotline. The nature of the event, where the GIF selection depended on the number of upvotes was biased against smaller groups. Unlike r/place, which was filled with numerous opposing factions, r/Sequence gave rise to united factions.

2) Sneknet

The extension is where things get interesting. Communities like the April Knights, Snakeroom and Sequence Narrators worked together to create a plot. A spreadsheet was shared, and any suggestions could be added. Anyone could edit. Around ACT IV, edit privileges were restricted to handle the rising number of users in our small communities. Fourteen individuals had editing access and the final say of what made it into the spreadsheet, after voting by the community.

Then came Sneknet. Sneknet, by Snakeroom, was initially built last year for Circle of Trust. It was an extension that sent links from a spreadsheet to all connected users and said users would automatically upvote the link via an official Reddit authored API call. They didn't have any opposition. Finalized GIFs in the spreadsheet were automatically upvoted. A few hundred users installed the extension. The extension was effective, so long as the user's websession was active. Were they to be AFK for too long a period, the websession would expire. As the upvote API calls did not include any "stay alive" functionality, no further votes would be logged until the user returned and refreshed their session and reengaged the extension. There was little chance to oppose the extension users. A lack of interest measurable immediately after the initialization of Act 1 combined with the coordinated use of timed submissions, link sharing, and coordinated extension based voting contributed to the strong perception of powerlessness many users felt towards interacting with r/Sequence. Acts 2 and 3 had got the ball rolling, and represented the peak of what r/Sequence could be. The botnet made Acts 4 and 5 mundane. These acts were 95% of what the botnet had decided to upvote. Reddit has dealt with factions and extensions before, but given that this was a monopoly, steps should have been taken (like preventing the use of Sneknet) to make the average user feel useful.

3) Individual Efforts Ignored

The sequence was not very friendly to singular users. If you wanted to get anything done, you would have to give up your unique identity and join the collective. The chaotic version of Sequence in the first few Acts was significantly more representative of the general public of Reddit than the carefully edited and crafted Acts 4 and 5.
Equal blame lies on r/Sequence itself. Reddit is a site with millions of users. To say that participation was low is an understatement. Around 160,000 individuals subscribed to the subreddit but less than 2000 actively participated in Act 5.

r/Sequence was not captivating, and users did not care. It was challenging for someone to post a GIF for a Scene one hour after the Act had started, and have it selected. The GIF would be in a sea of GIFs. They would have to wait for seven hours. The eight-hours-a-scene is an inherent problem with r/Sequence. It was not a good idea to throw fifty scenes into the mix for eight hours. With the Sneknet, an Act was quickly locked in by coordinated efforts. Lone users realized that their submissions would be in vain either way. Only one plot could go through, and only one group cared enough to make a significant push.

Next time

1) r/place
The style of r/place worked out perfectly. Starting from the bottom, an individual could feasibly make a piece of art, due to the size and time. Small groups could get enough space for their projects and could defend well enough. Giant groups typically seemed to be the most aggressive, but also had to hold back. Neither attackers nor defenders had a real advantage.

2) Suggestions
Since it was mostly controlled by one faction, a coherent story did eventually form. It could have been improved with some modifications like adding a timer on voting for a GIF like in r/place. The GIFs could have had a point value. Smaller groups could have focused on a lower number of slides and staked out a claim if the playing field was more extensive. One GIF could have been voted on at a time, for ten minutes.

3) Second chance
r/Sequence was a great concept in theory and had a lot of potential. Some have speculated that it will be tried again in sixty days based on a mod comment encoded in binary, when translated, says "GOOD GAME FUCKERS. LET US DANCE AGAIN IN TWO MONTHS", and that's good. You should take these sixty days to look within and make r/Sequence something that people remember forever.

Ups and Downs of Previous Events

The Button

The Good	The Bad
○ At the time, the anticipation of what would happen if the button wasn't pressed was quite riveting. ○ It ended up being a very social event, with a bunch of different factions forming with different ideologies as to how the button should operate. ○ Extensive data analysis in real time and additional metrics ○ Vast amounts of RP based on reactions to assigned flair	○ Nothing in-depth to do once you had chosen to press the button or not. It was just a long wait for the event to end and nothing to do. ○ Many people did not have proper instruction before pressing the button, so it's unfair to blame them when they lose their chance because they did not know any better.

Robin

The Good	The Bad
○ People were brought together with no worry of factions. ○ Subreddits for people you made friends with in the chats could be made through the UI. ○ For some, a greater goal to strive and organise towards (creating the largest room). ○ Active development community analyzed statistics to produce merge forecasts and extended Robin with spam blocking, channel filters, username mentions, autovoting, etc. (the largest rooms had enough legitimate traffic to make this necessary)	○ Moderation of the subreddits made through the event was confusing. ○ Chats became filled with spam bots as they became larger. ○ It was not explained well and many subreddits were accidentally made to never be used.

Place

| The Good	The Bad
○ The style worked out perfectly. Starting from the bottom, an individual could feasibly make a piece of art, due to the size and time. Small groups could get enough space for their projects and could defend well enough. Giant groups typically seemed to be the most aggressive, but also had to hold back somewhat or their neighbors would start taking over small portions. Neither attackers nor defenders had a true advantage. ○ Conflict for space encouraged interactions between individuals and communities (attacking, defending, alliances/diplomacy). ○ Immediacy of interaction - anyone could have a visible effect straight away, leading to an instant gratification. People could see what effect their actions had.	○ Bots still existed. They weren't massively overwhelming as they have been in other events, but they prevented some factions from being able to access areas. ○ After a day or two, most works were pretty much set in stone with large amounts of people preventing them from being overwritten (considering how fast it ended is this really a problem?) ○ Certain more controversial groups (such as the furry or anime oriented ones) were targeted more heavily. While grieving is its own form of fun, it certainly reflects the intent & opinion of users at the time, in this case victimizing these groups more heavily just for existing. ○ Having a pixel-locked canvas means that smaller groups that can only hold a small amount of space would have trouble creating and maintaining recognizable letters ○ A limited color palette made some logos and flags not truly representable within the canvas ○ Reddit as a whole was lucky to get people organized as quickly as it did, however organization may not always be as effective especially with unrest/apathy towards events caused by blunders ○ Reddit as a platform made it hard to organize things well, resulting in lots of groups using other programs

Circle of Trust

The Good	The Bad
○ The experiment was at least slightly interesting. "Who could get the biggest circle without getting betrayed a single time?" ○ There was power both in big groups as well as small groups.	○ Like The Button, there was nothing in-depth to do within the circles and after yours was ○ It failed to create a satisfying "victory" for people (very few felt as though they were actually accomplishing anything, even once they obtained a large circle) ○ Instead of lots of people working together, most people were out for themselves with the few connections they had. This made it feel far less in-depth, and more boring as a result ○ Certain controversial groups were also targeted here, except now bruteforce password cracking could ruin the experience of others through non-legitimate means ○ While the button and sequence had somewhat self-explanatory interfaces, C.o.T. lacked design. This made it harder to figure out what the goal of it was, as well as make it simply less visually engaging ○ It didn't come out on April 1, so much of the hype for the event was gone by the time it came out. ○ A number of bugs allowed for key access without being part of a circle

<h1 style="text-align:center">Sequence</h1>

The Good	The Bad
○ The ARG beforehand interested many users and caused many people who would possibly not have been involved to be involved, so when the event started, there was already a large base of people excited for it. ○ A coherent story did form in the last few acts,even though it was only because it was planned out in advance.	○ Everything else ○ The event is basically reddit inside of reddit and this generally bored people. ○ Once these people became disinterested, the effective botnet of chrome extensions was overpowering

General Suggestions

- Bots screw everything up. The botnets included in Reddit events are voluntary and can be uninstalled at any time, designed as a web browser extension. Every event has been plagued with bot activity and they have hardly ever led to a more pleasurable experience for individual and non-aligned users.
- On the other hand, in some cases bots and their development can make things interesting, just look at the extensions made for Robin that made it so much nicer, or the extension made to keep the button alive. In the case of r/Sequence, it didn't work because after much of Reddit gave up, the few users left were those with the extension installed and were not actively participating. This chart shows the activity of users as the event progressed, declining sharply after the first act, spiking at the beginning of every following act, as people found interest again and then immediately returning to minimal.
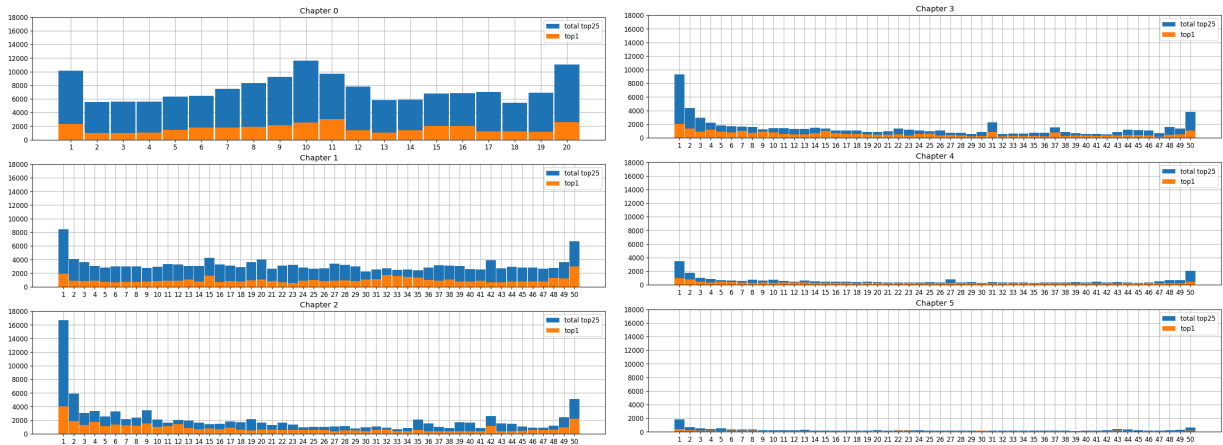
- The social aspect of the events is most of the event. No matter how it is designed, the social aspect can make it a lot better or completely unplayable.
- Any time the entirety of Reddit is allowed to do something and power depends on numbers, the game will be balanced away from an individual and towards whoever can amass the largest following. This doesn't mean all of Reddit can't interact, just power cannot be based on numbers, so making everything into smaller social groups breaks up the power but also allows everyone to still have interaction.

Concepts for Future Events

"The Subreddit Championship"

- This concept is a lot more game-like than previous events.
- Basically, each subreddit would have the ability to create a custom fighter (maybe a Snoo) to represent them in a tournament.
- Subreddits would be divided into huge brackets based on their size (number of subscribers).
- Every user would be able to choose one sub to represent. Upon choosing, they'd begin participating in a Twitch Plays Pokemon-like event to help their chosen sub fight others in its bracket.
- Not sure exactly how the fighting would work, but by "Twitch Plays Pokemon-like" I mean it would involve hundreds of people chaotically trying to accomplish simple tasks.
- Each sub could have a stickied thread once they joined and this thread would update with the current available actions, possibly in stickied comments, which would be voted upon, whichever one receiving the most votes would be selected.
- Eventually, the subreddit with the most cooperative user base would come out on top in the tournament.
- Since there are over a million subreddits, participation would be voluntary and initiated by a subreddit's moderators.