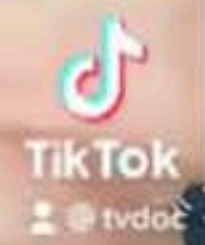




What are the challenges and benefits of a public-facing social media video assignment to student learning and research?



this semester we're experimenting with incorporating TikTok in the classroom!



ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

- Create TikTok videos for the course Television and Media Histories.
- This is an **OPTIONAL** Assignment and students use their own devices.
- Students create 3 TikToks over the course of the semester.
- Each TikTok must include at least 3 historical sources with an equity-minded focus, aiming to uncover contributions of marginalized people throughout TV history.
- Each video must be captioned for accessibility.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Students typically have opportunities to intervene in long-entrenched broadcast histories by writing research papers on the cultural contributions of individuals and programs never accorded their place in history or textbooks. When each semester ends, however, these uncovered histories and the hours spent writing historical narratives slide back into obscurity with no permanent home, no place of access.
- By engaging in thorough research and writing scripts, students uncover histories featuring marginalized communities and/or untold narratives of resistance. And students become reflexive learners of historiographical processes by having to decide which aspects of their topics are most important for a 3-minute video while under the critical eye of the TikTok public sphere.

METHODS

- Students opting to do the TikTok assignment completed statements explaining how they used sources, their process in making each TikTok, and what was surprising or interesting about the task.
- Students then completed an optional questionnaire about their thoughts on the TikTok assignment more broadly and its place within the class.
- **Students were not asked about efforts to ban TikTok.**



What are the challenges and benefits of a public-facing social media video assignment to student learning and research?



REPORTED PROS

- The project gave students experience making social media content, which is career applicable.
- Many called it a unique new way to conduct and share student research.
- Some believed it had the quality of an independent study / they learned more about the content than if studying for exams.
- Most called it a manageable amount of work on their own timeline.
- Students learned about more TV programs throughout history than from the course lectures or readings alone.

REPORTED CONS

- Students reported vulnerability about the public quality and critical eye of TikTok.
- One (white) student encountered racist trolling on a video about Black archetypes.
- Students started to worry about video performance and analytics.

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

- Students overwhelmingly support the project, many calling it love.
- From research through filming, students reported spending an average of 5 hours for every 3-minute video.
- Students reported doing more comprehensive research for TikTok than for typical assignments knowing their work would be public, and that TikTok users tend to be more critical and sensitive in nature.
- Students were divided on whether they liked the public aspect of TikTok, but leaned toward the positive. A few claimed it alleviated the pressures of public presentation in a classroom setting. For others, putting their faces on a public platform was intimidating at first.
- Students reported that the project was applied well to their current or future work as social media managers.
- Students learned nuance about historiography (writing history) by having to make content decisions about what to include and not in their videos.
- Students unanimously agreed that both the TikTok assignment should continue each semester and that they would select it again as one of their projects.





What are the challenges and benefits of a public-facing social media video assignment to student learning and research?

ASSORTED STUDENT COMMENTS

- "This project helped me identify different kinds of American televisual media by forcing me to dive deeper into TV history. By doing this, I was introduced to new information I had otherwise not known and I was able to relate what I was researching back to the content I learned in class."
- "I think it [helped learning] because I would watch other people's TikToks and I got to make and research for my own. I still learned about what other students researched by watching their TikToks and I would learn from them!"
- "I think it's very fun! I watch cool TikToks about random stuff all the time, and it was interesting to think about other people viewing my TikToks in that way."
- "I thought this was a super fun assignment! Good practice with the platform and a unique way to conduct research and actively share it with others."
- "I think it's a great idea. Especially for media studies, I think it's important to have an understanding of social media."
- "I like it! It's interesting and I think it's ahead of the time for learning."
- "I liked how this tied in something that students are interested in TikTok. It was good doing research which tied into other assignments. It was fun and a less stressful assignment."
- "I think that this assignment provided students with a fun and engaging way to create content in the form of a presentation ... there was also a standard of knowing that these TikToks will be public access to anyone, not just those in the class. For me personally, it made me overwhelmed with wanting to present as best as I could, to avoid embarrassment."



1945's LEADING SHORT SUBJECTS

(Continued from Preceding Page)

dropped to second place, with Merrie Melodius (in 1945 only) and Bugs Bunny taking the watchtower position from that time on. Nevertheless, since 1942, regardless of changes in cartoon favorites, cartoons have held the two top positions in short subject series supremacy.

With World War II ending in 1945, cartoons took a stronger position than ever, managing to cop the three top-rungs of the popularity ladder for themselves. For in third place in Bugs Bunny and MGM's Color Cartoons were the Walt Disney series. Not since 1940 when, with war clouds hovering over the United States, cartoons held top spot, has this type of short subject attained such public favor as in 1945.

Back in 1940, too, such series as MGM's Crime Does Not Pay, Warner's American Cavalcades and MGM's Pete Smith Specialties were half of the ten-rung popularity ladder. In 1945, the "Crimes" went down, the "Cavalcades" were upped to second place in 1942 and 1943, and the "Pete Smiths" see-sawed back and forth between first and second place in 1942 and 1943. While the American people were at that time to evince a strong interest in the intimitable Pete Smiths, it is interesting to note that the intimitable Pete Smiths were also toward the top of the list in the 1945 poll.

Time Trend

If an American Picture Industry poll is taken only in cartoons, which seem to be the most popular or favorite—but also toward the top of the list in the 1945 poll, it is interesting to note that the intimitable Pete Smiths were also toward the top of the list in the 1945 poll.

Color Cartoons (MGM)

Walt Disney Cartoons (Walt Disney)

Pete Smith Specialties (MGM)

this is the 1946 edition of the showman's Trade Review

TikTok
@tvdocstudenttok